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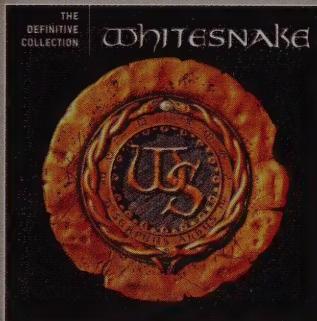
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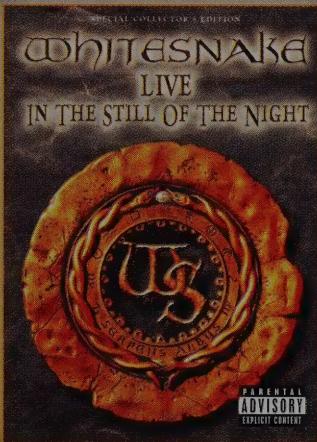
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## UP OR DOWN SYSTEM?

Thank you, **Hit Parader**, for your recent focus on System of a Down. You were right-on-the-mark when you called them "Metal's Most Important Band" on your September, 2005 cover. Why are they so important? Well, not only are they a brilliant group that creates cutting edge, yet highly commercial music, but they're also the voices of this generation, not shy about tackling a variety of important social issues... while never battering us over the head with their beliefs.

Simon  
Hartford, CT

System of a Down have picked up where Rage Against the Machine left off... and I do mean *LEFT*. Their politics are so radical and left-wing that they're totally out of step with the times. When will all the liberals of America embrace the fact that George W. Bush and the conservative right have a solid hold on this nation's beliefs and attitudes?

Corey  
Philadelphia, PA

System of a Down represents everything great about heavy metal. They're smart. They're funny. They're talented. They put on a great show and always place the wants and needs of their fans above everything else. It's too bad that there aren't many more bands like SOAD in the rock world—but I imagine if there were, System wouldn't be as totally unique as they are.

Reed  
Nome, AK

Call me crazy (better people than *you* already have!!) but I just don't "get" System of a Down. I'm a Priest/Maiden/Sabbath metal



fan, so to my ears their music sounds like it's a bastardized synthesis of rap, pop, industrial and rock. There's really not that much metal in there.

Phil  
Wheeling, WV

## ozzy vs. MAIDEN

Who's right... who's wrong?

Bruce Dickinson supposedly bad-mouths Ozzy and *Ozzfest*. Sharon Osbourne not only puts the ugly tongue back on Dickinson, but then actually gets a bunch of her cronies to disrupt Iron Maiden's final *Ozzfest* performance. It sounds to me like a bunch of spoiled brats at work here. Unfortunately, it gives a black eye to the entire metal form.

Brandon  
Tucson, AZ

What's going on in the metal world? You have Sharon Osbourne hiring people to throw eggs at Iron Maiden's Bruce Dickinson at *Ozzfest*? C'mon, people... can't we just all get along???

Ted  
Billings, MT

To me, one of the funniest parts of the whole Sharon Osbourne/Bruce Dickinson "war" is that Bruce seems to love making anti-American statements (or at least very pro-British ones), and has apparently directed a number of those at Ms. O. Doesn't he know that she's as British as he is? I always viewed Bruce as one of the "smarter" metal musicians (I guess everything is relative.) But maybe I was wrong.

Karen  
East Lansing, MI

So Ozzy Osbourne is never going to headline *Ozzfest* again. Well, I'll believe it when I see it. As one of the tens-of-thousands of fans who were greatly inconvenienced last summer when The Ozz decided to lop off a few tour dates to supposedly save what's left of his voice, all I can say is "what took you so long?" Perhaps you should have bailed from the headliners spot this year and saved so many of your fans a major headache.

Steve  
Logan, Utah

A: Korn: In prime form.

## KORN BUSINESS

I was very interested to read about Korn's new "business arrangement" with their record label. Apparently the band shares in a lot of the label's other deals, while the label shares in Korn's merchandising, tour revenues, etc. I find this so fascinating because I believe this deal will serve as a blue print for the way bands and record companies will work in the future. Long gone are the days when a label would design a band's logo, do their publicity photos and then turn all of that over to the group so that they can make a huge profit by selling themselves to some merchandiser. Good for Korn.

A.J.  
New York City

What is Korn without Head? Headless, that's what! And my fear is that this once-great

band will now begin to wander into even stranger, murkier musical directions without Head's strong, guiding force. Jonathan Davis may be the band's frontman, but those who've followed Korn for the last decade know that it's

been Head and Munky that have really provided the band's sound with its backbone and direction.

Katey  
Orange County, CA



Slipknot: making their mark.

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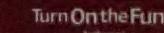
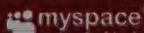
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## WE READ YOUR MAIL



Ozzy: A vital force.

Let me get this right... Korn has hired a "new" guitar player, but he's not gonna record with the band, or even appear on stage with them? He's just gonna stand behind the curtains and play the parts that Head used to perform? I thought I had seen and heard it all during my 15 years as a metal fan, but this one takes the cake... and the icing too.

Stan  
Staten Island, NY

I've noticed a bit of a shift in the editorial perspectives that **Hit Parader** has taken on Korn. For years they were the magazine's "saviors"—the "most important metal band of the last decade." Now, with their commercial power slightly diminished and some cracks appearing within the group's lineup, suddenly they're being treated like yesterday's news. Believe me, Korn will be bigger in 2006 than they've ever been before. Don't ask me how I know... I just know.

Ken  
New Orleans, LA

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# caught in the act

BY DAMON LANCASTER

## SEVENDUST

Lajon Witherspoon didn't want to make a big deal about it, but Sevendust's charismatic vocalist was feeling a little under the weather. While his bandmates—Morgan Rose (drums), John Connolly (guitar) Vinnie Hornsby (bass) and Sonny Mayo (guitar)—had already headed off to their tightly-cramped dressing room, Lajon decided to hang out for just a little while longer on the group's well-appointed tour bus. Whether it was because he needed a few minutes alone to gather his thoughts, or, as a crew member had speculated, he wanted to "protect" his powerful vocal chords from the theater's less-than-tropical internal temperatures, Lajon was clearly taking his time getting ready for that evening's performance. It was already more than two months into this Atlanta-based unit's tour in support of their latest disc, *Next*, and perhaps finding a few minutes of solace was what kept Lajon and bandmates so primed and ready for the musical task at hand.

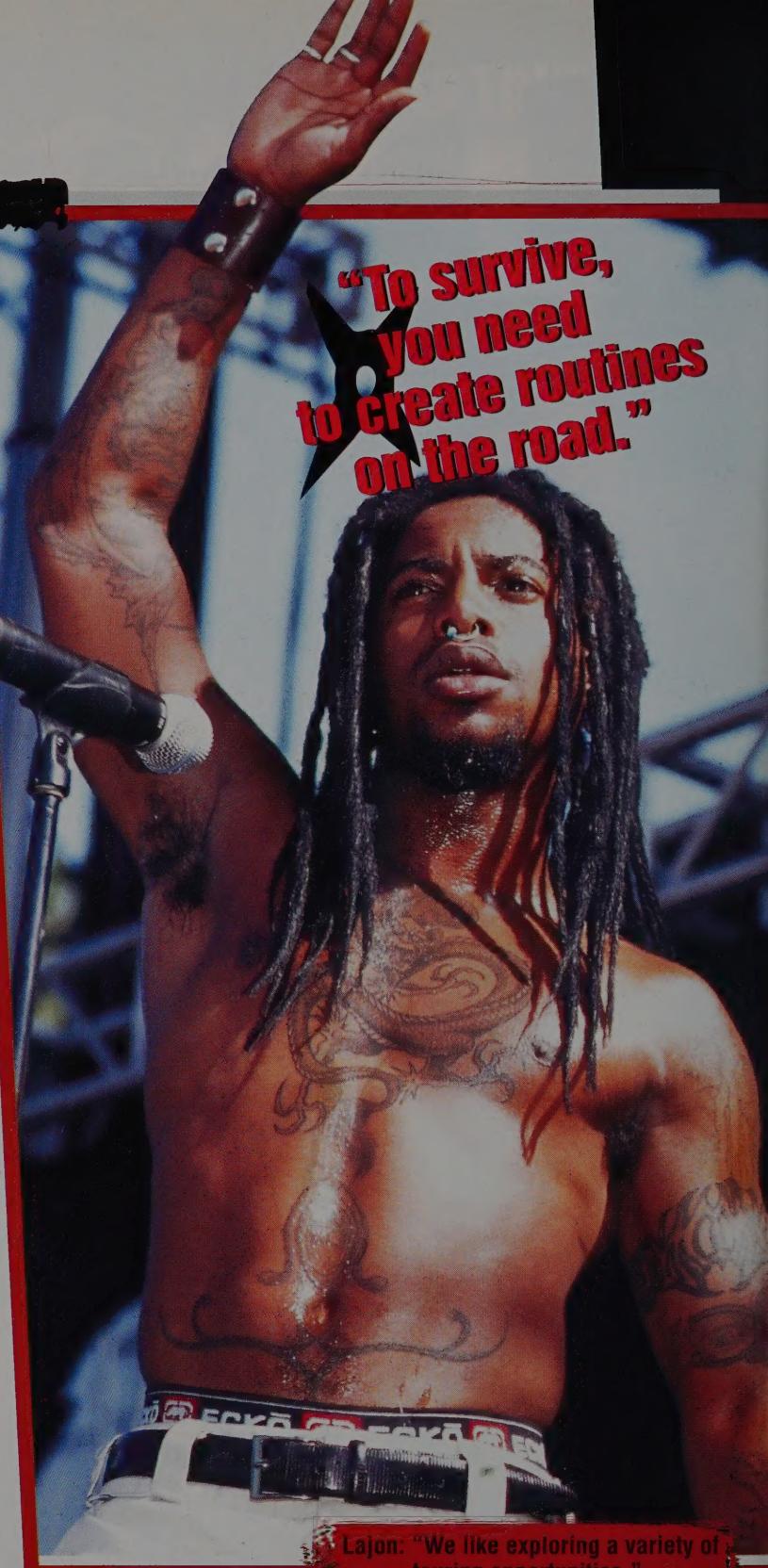
"You develop certain routines on the road," Lajon said shortly after emerging from his self-imposed hibernation. "It's the way you survive and make sure that things get done. We love being on the road, but it can drain you. We all have responsibilities away from the band, and those have to take a back seat when you're away from home. Sometimes you've just got to get yourself focused so you can give your best to the fans who come out to see you."

These days, providing their best effort to their ever-loyal following on a night-in, night-out basis appears to be Sevendust's primary rock and roll purpose. As they've bisected Planet Earth on their latest road jaunt—mixing headlining gigs with "special guest" assignments along the way—this high-energy unit has reaffirmed their position as one of the metal scene's most dynamic on-stage forces. With five critically-lauded albums to their credit—which in addition to *Next* include their self-titled 1997 debut, 1999's *Home*, 2001's *Animosity* and 2003's *Seasons*—the band now has more-than-enough material to handle any on-stage situations that may come their way. Need them to perform a tight 30-minute arena gig? They can pull out hits like *Black*, *Too Close To Hate* and *Denial*. Want them to perform a 90-minute headlining show? Then newer tunes like *Enemy* and *Pieces* are at hand to more-than-capably round out the set. Indeed, it appears as if in 2006 Sevendust is perfectly prepared to do just about anything anyone asks of them.

"It's kind of fun to have a variety of touring opportunities come your way," Lajon said. "When you're on the road performing the same set every night I imagine things can get a little stale. For us that never happens because we now have enough material to mix things up whenever we want. That really keeps things exciting."

Somewhat ironically, for all the bombast their guitar-laden sound creates on stage, perhaps the Dust's crowning in-concert moment occurs when they trade in their over-amplified axes for acoustic instruments and launch into their touching version of *Angel's Son*—originally a hit for this unit back in 2002. Over the last few years, the song—recorded as a tribute to Mayo's former Snot bandmate, Lynn Straight—has become one of Sevendust's best-known and best-loved tunes. Especially in these oft-troubling times, the

**"To survive, you need to create routines on the road."**



**Lajon: "We like exploring a variety of touring opportunities."**

crowd's reaction to that song's powerful, uplifting message and heart-felt emotion never fails to send a chill down Lajon's spine.

"It happens every night, at every show," he said. "It's truly an amazing thing to see and hear. We know the fans come out to rock with us, and there's no question that we deliver for them. But when we tone things down for a few songs, they're just as there for us. Their reaction to *Angel's Son* is just incredible and, even after all these shows, I think we're all amazed by it every time it happens."

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BAND ON THE RISE!

# SHOOTING STARS

BY SAM HATCHER



**"We pushed and pulled and somehow came up with something special."**

Benjamin Perri, lead vocalist for From Autumn To Ashes, knew that there was a growing stigma within the music industry that his band would need to quickly dispel... at least if they hoped to attain any degree of lasting notoriety. You see, in recent months there's been a fast-growing sentiment within the rock biz that the style of music created by Perri, drummer Francis Mack, guitarist/keyboardist Brian Deneeve, guitarist Jonathan Cox and bassist Josh Newton—filled as it is with metallic guitar riffs, pulsating rhythms and over-emotive vocals—was quickly growing passe. It wasn't as if the music was not powerful and moving, it was more that it was simply being done to death by dozens of bands, all of whom felt they held the key to the lingering pathos of teen-age angst. So when the time came for this New York-based unit to record their latest disc, **Abandon Your Friends**, they knew they were gonna have to take their sound and turn it inside out.

"When we started writing this album we were determined to both be true to what we had already established, yet at the same time push ourselves to try a few new things," Perri said. "We found this old house in upstate New York and we all just locked ourselves away there. It stressed a lot of us out to be in constant contact with one another and to always be thinking about music. We were all anxious to try different things, which kind of pushed us and pulled us, but in the

end it somehow all came together and produced something that we think is very special."

From Autumn to Ashes has been working on perfecting their "special" approach to the rock and roll craft since the band first got together in early 2000. Within months of their formation they had begun to make their mark on the traditionally jaded Long Island music scene, winning over hordes of young, impressionable fans, most of whom found themselves bored-to-tears by the over-predictable strains that were then dominating the rock world. By 2001 the efforts of FATA were rewarded when a small indie label stepped forward and offered the band the chance to record their first disc, **Too Bad**

road and shove it down people's throats. We developed this attitude that nothing could stop us, which is kind of the exact opposite of the way a lot of young bands feel. That attitude has carried us a long way."

Now with the arrival of **Abandon Your Friends**, From Autumn to Ashes' special attitude has carried them to an even higher musical plateau. Produced by the notorious Garth Richardson, the disc further showcases this band's fearless rock and roll attitude, one that draws equally from the majesty of Led Zeppelin and the cutting edge musical cycles of late 2005. On such tracks as *Short For Show*, *Long To Go*

**"We wanted to be true to ourselves yet push ourselves as hard as possible."**

**You're Beautiful**, an album they helped spawn what would soon become known as the emo/metal sound. The disc proceeded to sell an impressive 100,000 copies, and led directly to the release of the unit's second album, 2003's **The Fiction We Live**. With a greater emphasis on From Autumn to Ashes' not-so-delicate blend of subtlety and sonic overkill, the effort sold 150,000 copies, and further established this quixotic bunch as important new players upon the hard rock scene.

"When we started this band we took advantage of every opportunity we could get," Perri said. "We'd put out an album and then hit the road—whether or not anyone had ever heard any of the music. We didn't care; we just wanted to get on the

and *Where Do You Draw the Line*, FATA show that they're not afraid to reveal their inner sensitivity—even when they're covering it with a layer of power chords. It's all part of the musical mix that promises to carry this ever-clever unit straight to the top of the rock pile.

"It's always been hard for us to find a niche and fit where we belong," Perri said. "But that's also kind of cool because it allows us to wiggle into a lot of different places. We can go on the Warped Tour, or play with Killswitch Engage and Lamb of God and hold our own with both genres."

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# PICK HIT

BY PATRICK ZANNETTI

"Institute is heavier than Bush, but fans of that band should like what we do."



Many of you reading this may best remember Gavin Rossdale as the handsome, charismatic frontman for Bush, the band that he continually led to the top of the charts in the late '90s. Others may know this multi-talented Londoner as the jet-setting husband of pop princess Gwen Stefani. But no matter how you may choose to recall Mr. Rossdale, the fact of the matter is that this ambitious vocalist/guitarist has recently launched a new project, Institute, that seems destined to raise his "Q Factor" to an all-time high. Joining forces with guitarist Chris Traynor (formerly of Helmet and Orange 9mm), bassist Cache Tolman, and drummer Charlie Walker, Rossdale's first post-Bush project proves that he hasn't lost any of his musical edge, and in fact, has decided to "heavy up" his rock and roll approach on Institute's debut disc, *Distort Yourself*.

"The last few years have been a very interesting time for me, with Institute being the latest development," Rossdale said with a sly smile. "In summary, I guess you could say that I got married, I lost a band, and I gained a band. But hopefully there's a bit more to it than that. I know that Bush developed quite a strong following over the years and all I can ask is that those fans check out Institute—I believe they'll like what they hear."

While it seems a safe bet that fans of Bush's dramatically heavy sound will find an instant affinity for Institute, Rossdale warns all not to expect this effort to mirror his previous work in sound, attitude or fashion. In fact, with Helmet's Page Hamilton serving as producer for *Distort Yourself*, the music has taken on a much more frenetic, almost frantic pace. With guitars rumbling with sonic intensity, and Rossdale's plaintive vocals exuding more power than ever before, on songs such as *Wasteland*, *Information Age*, and the album's first single, *Bulletproof Skin*, Institute show that they're a band not shy about cranking the proceedings to "10" ... or beyond!

"That was perhaps my biggest decision," Rossdale said. "After Bush came to an end, I signed a new recording contract and had to decide where I wanted to take my music. The first decision was that I wanted my next album to be a band project rather than some solo effort. I wanted to collaborate with other musicians, and I chose the name Institute because to me that signifies a type of cultural collective. Then I met Page, who is someone I've long admired. From there, the music just went in a naturally heavy direction. Some of that was Page's influence, some was the band's decision, but I can guarantee that I didn't have to be carried kicking and screaming into the proceedings."

Rossdale is the first to admit that it will take a bit of luck, perhaps a dash of pure rock and roll "magic", to have his current group come close to matching the commercial exploits of Bush, a band that created a string of platinum-selling discs throughout their seven year run. But at this stage of his career, with fame and fortune already his constant companions, Rossdale is seeking an even greater plateau—true artistic fulfillment. While he is the first to acknowledge that hefty sales for *Distort Yourself* will serve to bolster his ego as well as Institute's collective pocket book, he already feels satisfied with what his latest unit has created.

"I still love the music we made in Bush, and I still very much like the members of that band," he said. "But to my ears that was different music for a different time. Obviously, there are some similarities between Bush and Institute because of the way I write and sing. But since everyone in this band was involved in the creative process there's definitely a different air surrounding the proceedings. All the guys in Bush were from London. All the guys in this band—except for me—are from New York. Thus there's a bit of a different vibe and energy going on. It's all very exciting for me."

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"I'm not the kind of person who generally gets very excited about things. Actually, those around me tell me that I tend to have a somewhat morose view of life. But things have gone so well that even I've been surprised."

BEN BURNLEY, BREAKING BENJAMIN

"My songs are so personal, they come from deep inside me. I start writing down my thoughts—usually very dark, depressing thoughts—and those eventually become the lyrics to my songs."

TRENT REZNOR, NINE INCH NAILS

"We've been on the road with a lot of the big bands out there, and they're all great people. We enjoy hangin' out with them and having fun—and we all love the chance to share a stage and just blow people away with the music we play. It's not a competitive atmosphere at all. It's just very confident bands that like one another—but that also want to blow away the fans at every show."

CHRIS ADLER, LAMB OF GOD

"It's an exciting time for us. I think we all sense that there's a great desire all over the world to hear the kind of music Maiden plays. Even in the States—where they can be a bit fickle at times—the music is making a great resurgence."

BRUCE DICKINSON, IRON MAIDEN

"Each video we do plays a very specific role. We've tried to go down an artistic wormhole and give our fans a good look at what goes on inside our heads. We want them to get a glimpse of our creative process. The videos are designed to grab hold of the fans and take them deeper into the experience that is Slipknot."

CLOWN, SLIPKNOT

"It is a little hard to believe that we're getting so much attention with this album. The problem for us right now is to not let any of the nice things people are saying have an impact on us. We've all seen a lot of bands that go from being cool guys to pains in the ass as soon as they start to feel good about themselves. We do feel good about ourselves, but we're not gonna let it give us any massive egos."

TROY SAUNDERS, MASTODON

# THEY SAID IT!!!

Rock stars have a tendency to say the outrageous... the fascinating... the insightful... the amusing. All they really need is a little prodding in the right direction. That's our job here at **Hit Parader**. We call the results of our efforts, *They Said It!*



"I was always interested in unusual things."

"I am somewhat optimistic that there will be a future for Sabbath after this tour. There were times in the recent past when I really didn't see the light at the end of the tunnel. Ozzy didn't seem to be into it, and I just didn't know if we would ever be able to get Sabbath going again. Now I feel much more confident that we can."

TONY IOMMI, BLACK SABBATH

"We chose material that we all felt comfortable with. There were certain Queen songs that weren't right for Paul (Rogers) and we all knew that. But so much of the material fused together so naturally and brilliantly that we all were startled. It makes for a great show since Paul gets to present songs that he may never have had the chance to sing before, and we get to play some of his songs that we've always loved and admired."

BRIAN MAY, QUEEN

"I was always interested in unusual things. Long before I ever thought about starting a band I was into seeing horror movies and reading about serial killers. So when I was first getting into music, the whole New

York 'alternative' scene of the early '80s was flourishing and the kind of imagery associated with that kind of stuff just fit right in."

ROB ZOMBIE

"When we're on the road, we always get totally caught up in the energy. We just feed off of each other and the crowd. It doesn't matter what we may be thinking or feeling during the day, once the show begins we're there 100 percent. We push ourselves so hard that when we finally come off stage we sometimes feel like we're gonna collapse. A few times, we have! And I don't know how everyone else in the band feels, but when we're up there and the music is loud and the crowd is hot, I feel like goin' crazy. The crowd enhances our performance, but I think it's still the music that makes me feel that way."

FIELDY, KORN

# KERRY IS THE REIGNING KING

The EMG KPK set



Pickup the **SLAYER** DVD "STILL REIGNING"



EMG © 2006 PHOTO: HANS ZEEL

# COLLISION COURSE

HP Reveiws The Latest CDs, DVDs & Anything else we darn well please!

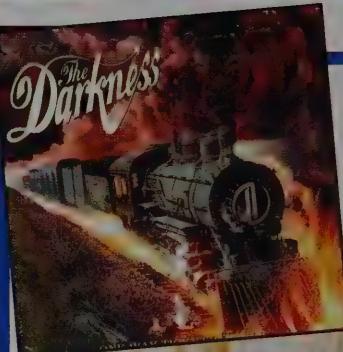
rating system: \*\*\*\*\* awesome ••••• slammin' •••• smokin' •• lame • trash

## THE DARKNESS

### ONE WAY TICKET TO HELL... AND BACK

The Darkness are one of those unique bands that leave no middle ground—either you love this British retro-rock unit with all of your heart and soul, or you hate their somewhat contrived sound with an equal passion. On their sophomore outing, **One Way Ticket To Hell... And Back** (which makes titular reference to the myriad difficulties this unit suffered through since their release of their platinum-selling debut effort), vocalist/guitarist Justin Hawkins and the boys show that they've begun to grow up—while never losing sight of their hard rocking roots. Paying direct homage to influences such as Queen and AC/DC, the Darkness have begun to find a sound of their own—though at times you'd swear you've heard *everything* contained on this album somewhere before... and you'd probably be right.

**RATING:** \*\*\*\*



On "paper" I should hate the Darkness. They're everything I tend to despise—a rather uninventive hard rock band that relies solely on decades-old lyrical and visual concepts to convey their musical message. But after totally digesting their first effort, **Permission to Land**, I've now begun to do the same with their latest. And, against my better judgment, I must admit that I can't get enough of this overly-produced, pop-leaning hard rock fluff.

**RATING:** \*\*\*\*

## KORN

### SEE YOU ON THE OTHER SIDE

There was a moment in rock and roll time when Korn was "it", the most inventive, influential and important band around. And while that moment in the sun is now almost a decade old, there's no denying the notion that this California-based heavy rock unit remains one of the most continually challenging units to ever wander down the rock and roll pike. On their latest disc, **See You On the Other Side**, Korn has teamed with a variety of pop-oriented producers to create their most experimental album in ages. It's as heavy as ever, but in a decidedly different way. At times the

Kornsters sound like an industrialized Nine Inch Nails, while at other times they seem to almost wallow in Goth sensibilities. All-in-all, a superlative effort.

**RATING:** \*\*\*\*\*



I can't believe that my illustrious compatriot in this *Collision Course* column chose to cast a "5 Star" rating on Korn's new disc. I'm not saying it isn't an interesting, and at times even compelling collection. But to my ears it seems that this time around these guys are just trying too hard to be different. Maybe it's



because without Head they've lost some of their guitar drive. I don't know the answer. But to my time-tested ears, while *See You On The Other Side* is a major step-up from recent Korn releases, it still doesn't hold up when compared to some of this band's classic efforts.

RATING: \*\*\*

## AEROSMITH, ROCKIN' THE JOINT

If there ever was a totally pointless album,



## The Indies

BY AMY SCIARRETTO

### IN FLAMES

#### Come Clarity (Ferret)

Sweden's In Flames are often credited alongside At The Gates as architects of the melodic, Swedish death metal sound, thanks to albums like *Colony* and *Clayman*, which combined brawn with beauty. In Flames have established themselves as a



presence in the Swedish metal scene for the past decade. On *Come Clarity*, the band has made some changes, such as aligning themselves with a new label (Ferret), but they're still doing the same thing, musically. *Come Clarity* spills over with mid-to-fast tempo metal anthems threaded with clean vocal and guitar melodies. Frontman Anders Frieden goes from gruff growls to higher register singing within a breath, against a backdrop of dueling guitar riffery. *Take This Life*, *Leeches*, and *Come Clarity* are the album's key tracks. On *Come Clarity*, consistency is the key and In Flames have locked it down.

RATING: \*\*\*

FOR FANS OF: Killswitch Engage, Shadows Fall

### SO I HAD TO SHOOT HIM

#### Alpha Males And Popular Girls (Crucial Blast)

We're not going to lie to you. So I Had To Shoot him are quite the musical anomaly. This band, dear reader, is what rock critics like to call art damaged, Jekyll and Hyde style blast pop. What that means is *Alpha Males And Popular Girls* is intelligent, thought out rock music, prone to schizophrenic, unpredictable metallic outbursts, like super fast riffs that come out of nowhere, if not somewhere in left field. It's also got these cute female vocals that call to mind 80s new wave icon, Blondie. There's a real danceable element to much of *Alpha Males And Popular Girls*. The record is definitely a mish mash that won't inspire middle of the road emotions towards it. You'll either love this or hate it. We love it.

RATING: \*\*\*

FOR FANS OF: Dillinger Escape Plan, Blondie, Red Knife Lottery

### DEMON HUNTER

#### The Triptych (Solid State)

Demon Hunter's singer and guitarist Ryan and Don Clark used to play together in Training For Utopia, a very noisy hardcore band from the mid to late 90s. When TFU broke up, the brothers Clark paired up again for Demon Hunter, a decidedly different band. Demon Hunter play thrashy, straight forward, crunchy, and groove-oriented metal that admittedly takes influence from metal masters like Machine Head and Pantera. *The Triptych*, the band's third album, is full of unforgettable hooks on songs like *Undying* and *Not I*. One thing is for sure; you won't be able to walk away from *The Triptych* without humming some of the song's memorable melodies. They'll tattoo themselves on your brain. There's also a gorgeous, choral-like female vocal that kicks off the album. Kudos for Demon Hunter for thinking outside the standard metal box on *The Triptych*.

RATING: \*\*\*

FOR FANS OF: Machine Head, Pantera, Skinlab

### MAYLENE AND THE SONS OF DISASTER

#### Maylene And The Sons Of Disaster (Mono Vs. Stereo)

Maylene And The Sons Of Disaster is the new band of former Underoath singer Dallas Taylor. Since Taylor's departure, Underoath have grown to become one of the screamo scene's biggest sensations. Taylor isn't trying to capture or latch on to any of that glory with his new outfit. He's clearly moved on, because *Maylene And The Sons Of Disaster* is a modernized, youthful attempt at dirty Southern

Rock sliced open by a distinct hardcore edge. Songs like *Caution: Dangerous Curves Ahead and Bang! The Witch Is Dead* are bolstered by distorted, blues-infused rock 'n roll riffs and Taylor's gritty screaming style. If you like Southern guitar style bands like Every Time I Die and Seemless, than Maylene And The Sons Of Disaster will cause your metal cup to overflow.



RATING: \*\*\*

FOR FANS OF: Underoath, Seemless, Every Time I Die, Fight Paris

### SOME GIRLS

#### Heaven's Pregnant Teens (Eoitanh)

If there is a line between crafting artistic noise and driving a listener crazy with dissonance, Some Girls certainly like to flirt with crossing that line on *Heaven's Pregnant Teens*. The

# The 300ies

band crosses the line with one foot, does a little dance, then crosses back to the other side of listenability over and over again. **Heaven's Pregnant Teens** doesn't exercise much caution when it comes to alienating listeners with blasts of noise. This album is a cacophony, and is reserved for special types of metal fans—those that are hipsters and those that like to be assaulted with chaotic, unstable fits and starts. We're not saying it's not good; we're saying it's a frenzied listen suited for older, trendier, and progressive (read: not prog rock) metal fans.

**RATING:** \*\*  
**FOR FANS OF:** Converge, Look What I Did

## WATCHMAKER *Erased From The Memory Of Man*

(Willowtip)

Savage and sadistic are two accurate terms that can be applied to Watchmaker's **Erased From The Memory Of Man**. If you want to cleanse your body, mind and soul of any rage, hate or even mild irritations, than this is the record to do it with. It's the only accoutrement you'll need to drain yourself of any negative emotion or energy. Who needs aromatherapy when you've got the exhausting, cathartic noise of Boston's Watchmaker. This record operates at two speeds: fast, and mind-numbingly fast. Vocalist, and we use that term loosely because all he does is scream bloody murder in a way that you know gave him migraines during the recording process, Brian Livotti spews vocal venom amid fast blasts of riffs. Casual noise metal fans need not apply; this type of music is only for the serious, and the strongly constituted.

**RATING:** \*\*\*  
**FOR FANS OF:** Deadguy, Gadget

## BOLT THROWER *Those Once Loyal*

(Metal Blade)

You gotta give England's Bolt Thrower credit. Like a cockroach, this band endures, continuing to make death metal when their contemporaries and counterparts have thrown

in the towel. Bolt Thrower received an extra shot of rejuvenation on their eighth album, **Those Once Loyal**, which sees the return of original throat Karl Willets. On **Those Once Loyal**, Bolt Thrower continue to do what they've always done so well,



and that's churn out mid-tempo, guttural vocal death metal. **Those Once Loyal** has a militaristic/war theme throughout the lyrics and artwork, and overall, it's decent death metal sans any frills or extraneous bells and whistles. *Entrenched* and *The Kill Chain* are the album's best cuts.

**RATING:** \*\*  
**FOR FANS OF:** Slayer, Celtic Frost, classic Metallica

## 3 **Wake Pig** (Metal Blade)

With the word "metal" in its company name, it's obvious that Metal Blade Records is a label that has metal as its stock in trade. But the label has been known to branch out into other subgenres/categories of rock music. 3's **Wake Pig** is one of the cases where Metal Blade goes in a different direction. **Wake Pig** is quirky, left of center prog rock, where vocalist Joey Eppard employs a femmer than femme vocal style, not unlike Rush's Geddy Lee or Coheed And Cambria's Claudio Sanchez. The album is also guitar driven (don't skip the strummy, pick happy *Bramfatura*), thanks to the layers Eppard and Billy Riker create. **Wake Pig**, thanks to its epic songs like *Alient Angel* and *Trust*, is definitely not your standard Metal Blade fare!

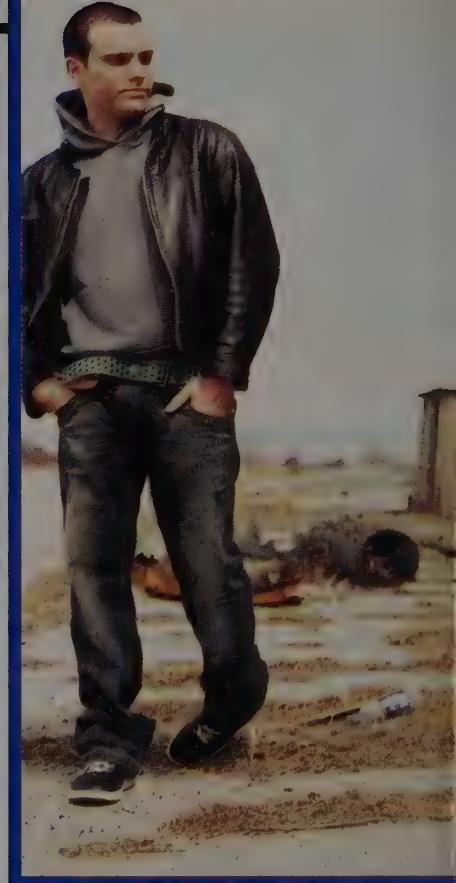
**RATING:** \*\*\*  
**FOR FANS OF:** Rush, Coheed And Cambria

## DEMIRICOUS **One** (Metal Blade)

Sweden's Demiricous play metal with an out-and-out case of Slayer worship. And in the heavy metal world, that's more of a complement than a curse. Because what self-respecting metalhead doesn't like Slayer? Obviously, the Demiricous dudes do!

*Repentagram*, *Vagrant Idol*, and *To Serve Is To Destroy*, from their Metal Blade Debut, **One**, are healthy, heaping slabs of thrash metal that make this an album an impressive debut. It's not surprising, since record label A&R reps were breathing down the band's neck, thanks to their impressive demo, simply titled *Demo Anno 2004*. Quality riffing, and screamy vocals abound on **One**.

**RATING:** \*\*\*  
**FOR FANS OF:** Slayer, The Haunted, At The Gates



unfortunately it's Aerosmith's **Rockin' the Joint (Live at the Hard Rock Hotel Las Vegas)**. After all, these guys have already probably released more live albums than anyone else in hard rock history, and aside from the inclusion of a few so-called "rareties", such as the rarely-performed-live *Seasons of Wither*, there is little reason to go out and lay down your hard-earned bucks on this collection. Oh sure, there's no such thing as a truly bad Aerosmith disc; every song is a classic, and every performance is first-rate. But at the same time, unless you're the ultimate Aerosmith fanatic, who must own every note these guys ever released, this is one collection that you can pass on without missing a proverbial beat.

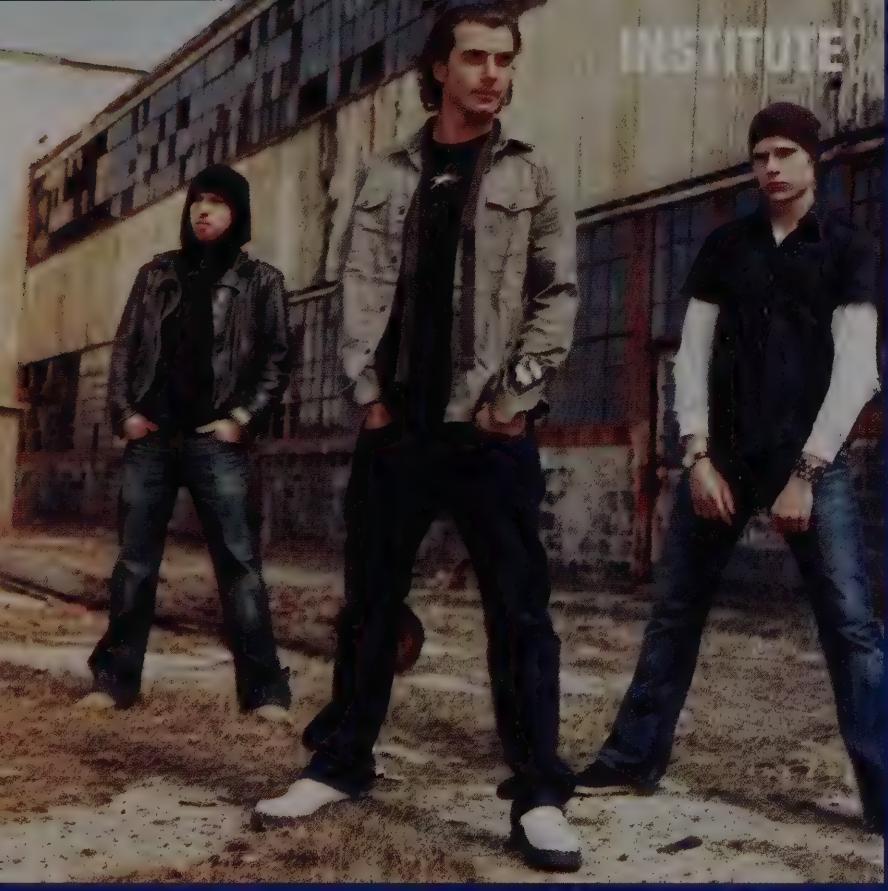
**RATING:** \*\*

I've always had the utmost respect for Aerosmith—everything from their unmatched musical skill to their "give the fans what they want" marketing savvy. So I accept yet another live album from them in the exact same manner in which it is offered... a chance to delve deep into this distinctly American band's unique take on the hard rock form. As the old movie title goes, nobody does it better, and after more than three decades of doing that thing that they do so well, **Rockin' the Joint** proves that point still lies clearly in Aerosmith's favor.

**RATING:** \*\*\*

## INSTITUTE, **DISTORT YOURSELF**

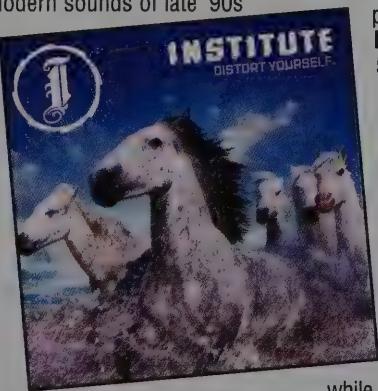
Many of you reading this may have been



caught up in the swirling vortex of musical magic that Gavin Rossdale created with his previous band, Bush, a decade ago. As a link between the grunge sounds of Seattle and the more modern sounds of late '90s hard rock,

Bush played a pivotal (though often overlooked) role in the form's survival. But now it's the middle of a new decade, and after a lengthy absence Rossdale is back with a new band, Institute, and a new album, *Distort Yourself*. And make no mistake about it, while there are some hauntingly familiar elements here, this sure as heck ain't Bush. Thanks in part to the production work of Helmet's Page Hamilton, this is Rossdale at his heaviest and most biting. This stuff practically sizzles.

**RATING:** \*\*\*\*



## SHINEDOWN, *US AND THEM*

Shinedown scored one of 2004's most surprising hits when their debut album, *Leave a Whisper*, sold more than 500,000 copies while spawning a series of hit singles like *Fly From the Inside* and *No More Love*. The band's Southern-fried sound took the influences of fellow Jacksonville-ites Lynyrd Skynyrd and brought them kickin' and screamin' into a new age. Now these hard rockin', yet sensitive Florida boys are back with a second hearin' helpin' of their hard-boiled musical output, *Us And Them*. This time around the Shinedown gang try to expand their artistic frontiers

while maintaining their roots-rock soul. It works a lot more often than it doesn't, though the break-out "hits" don't seem to pop out quite as quickly on this one as on their debut... though it just may be that after the blatant commercial power of *Save Me* everything else seems quite tame in comparison.

**RATING:** \*\*\*\*

Okay, I know I tend to be esoteric to a fault. I'd rather listen to second-hand Killswitch Engage outtakes than the best that Staind have to offer. But this is my job, so I do it the best that I can. On a personal level I hate everything that Shinedown represent—long-haired good ol' boys who seem to have drawn their entire musical inspiration from the '70s. But on the other hand, if someone's gotta do this, then I guess these guys do it better than most.

**RATING:** \*\*

Hmmmm, so Gavin Rossdale (Mr. Gwen Stefani to me, tee hee) has decided to take his Bush and heavy it up. The results, as heard throughout Institute's debut album, *Distort Yourself*, aren't bad at all. There's an edge to this material that will definitely surprise anyone expecting a 21st Century version of *Everything Zen*.

**RATING:** \*\*\*

## Quick Reviews

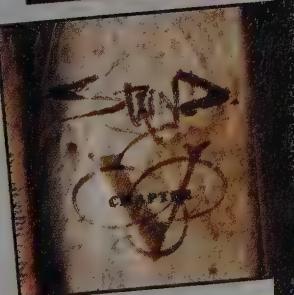
**STATIC-X,  
START A WAR**  
**RATING:** \*\*\*\*



**ROBERT PLANT,  
MIGHTY  
REARRANGER**  
**RATING:** \*\*\*\*\*



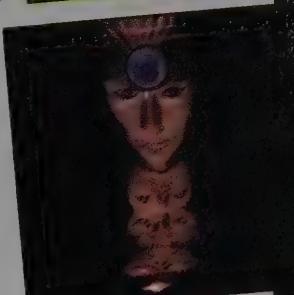
**STAIND,  
CHAPTER V**  
**RATING:** \*\*\*



**DREDG,  
CATCH WITHOUT  
ARMS**  
**RATING:** \*\*\*



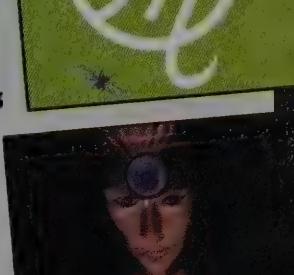
**SYSTEM OF A  
DOWN,  
HYPNOTIZE**  
**RATING:** \*\*\*\*



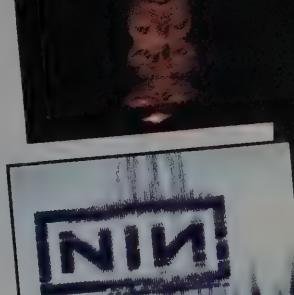
**NINE INCH  
NAILS,  
WITH TEETH**  
**RATING:** \*\*\*\*\*



**AUDIOSLAVE,  
OUT OF EXILE**  
**RATING:** \*\*\*\*\*



**DARK NEW  
DAY,  
TWELVE YEAR  
SILENCE**  
**RATING:** \*\*\*



**SEETHER,  
KARMA &  
EFFECT**  
**RATING:** \*\*\*



**DEF LEPPARD,  
ROCK OF AGES**  
**RATING:** \*\*\*\*



**JUDAS PRIEST,  
ANGEL OF  
RETRIBUTION**  
**RATING:** \*\*\*\*



**MUDVAYNE,  
LOST AND  
FOUND**  
**RATING:** \*\*\*



**OZZY  
OSBOURNE,  
Prince Of  
Darkness**  
**RATING:** \*\*\*\*



**MOTLEY CRUE,  
RED, WHITE &  
CRUE**  
**RATING:** \*\*\*\*



**KORN:** Vocalist Jonathan Davis reports that response to the band's new disc, *See You On the Other Side*, has surprised even the seen-it-all, done-it-all Korn frontman. "Because we used producers that led us in a somewhat different direction, and because we recorded as a four piece for the first time, we all wondered how the fans would react," he said. "But thankfully everyone seems to be really into this music. I know that we're as excited about it as anything we've ever done. And as far as only recording with four members goes, I think it actually streamlined the process a bit."

**SYSTEM OF A DOWN:** The release of their new album *Hypnotize*—which follows hot-on-the-heels of their platinum-selling March release, *Mezmerize*—has created a bit of a "problem" for the members of System of a Down. It seems that the band's shows have recently been running well over two-and-a-half hours in length, and the group doesn't know what material they can possibly cut. "We want to feature at least some material from both of the new albums," said guitarist Daron Malakian. "But there are also a lot of the older things that we know the fans come to hear. Our solution has been to just play 'em all."

**DARKNESS:** Why did it take the Darkness more than two years to follow up their debut disc, *Permission to Land*, with the new *One Way Ticket to Hell... And Back?* Well, according to main man Justin Hawkins, the album title tells it all. "It hasn't been an easy time for us," he said. "And that's putting it very mildly. We were totally exhausted by the time we finally got off the road in 2004, and then the pressure started to build about this album. We found ourselves caught up in it in a variety of ways. We never seemed to be satisfied by what we were accomplishing. It created quite a mess."

**AUDIOSLAVE:** Following the release of their *Live in Cuba* CD, Audioslave guitarist Tom Morello admits that he's received a wide range of response—not so much for the superlative musical quality featured on the album, but rather for the band's decision to play Cuba in the first place. "We were the first American rock band to ever perform there," Morello said. "And while we received a lot of praise for doing that, there were also quite a few people who questioned us going against the U.S. cultural embargo that has stood against Cuba since the mid-'50s. I told those people that we were there to communicate with the people... not support their government."

**SLIPKNOT:** According to drummer Joey Jordison, don't count on seeing another album from his side-project, the Murderdolls any time in the near future... if ever! Despite the critical and chart success enjoyed by the band's 2002 debut effort (filled as it was with retro-rock riffs), it seems as if Jordison's interests have wandered a bit and rather than restarting the Dolls' musical engines, he may spend parts of his 2006 Slipknot hiatus serving as tour

drummer for bands like Satyricon. "Nothing's really been determined yet," he said. "But I am satisfied that we did the Murderdolls the first time. There are a lot of interesting possibilities on the agenda."

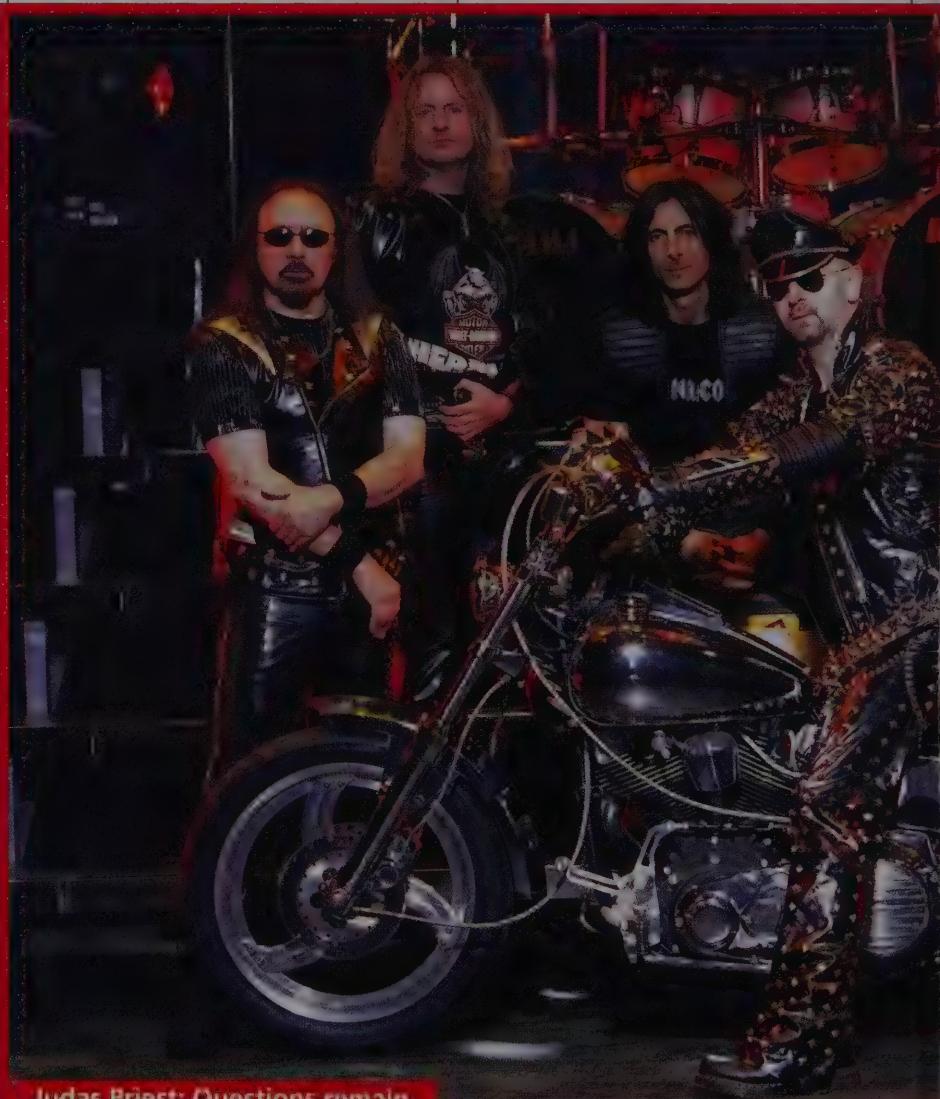
**JUDAS PRIEST:** The members of Judas Priest are still a bit miffed by their apparent inability to nail down a State-side arena tour during the fall/winter of 2005. The band had hoped that the sales strength shown during their summer-long outdoor "shed" tour, teamed with the response afforded their latest disc, *Angel of Retribution*, would lead them directly to filling 20,000 seat indoor arenas. "When I was still with my solo band, we opened for Iron Maiden on their arena tour," said vocalist Rob Halford. "The goal for Priest was to follow a similar path."

**AEROSMITH:** Here's a little factoid that will amaze you... astound you... or at least hopefully entertain you. Do you know how many official "greatest hits" or "live" albums Aerosmith have released during their historic career? The answer, believe it or not, is an

even DOZEN!! That's certainly got to be a record of some kind. Don't believe us? Check this out: there's been 1978's *Live Bootleg*, 1980's *Greatest Hits*, 1986's *Classics Live*, 1987's *Classics Live II*, 1988's *Gems*, 1991's *Pandora's Box*, 1994's *Big Ones*, 1994's *Box of Fire*, 1998's *A Little South of Sanity*, 2001's *Young Lust*, 2002's *O, Yeah!*, and 2005's *Rockin' the Joint (Live at the Hard Rock Hotel Las Vegas)*.

**STONE SOUR:** Corey Taylor—the ever-busy frontman for both Slipknot and Stone Sour—reports that work on the second SS disc is proceeding at a brisk pace. They've already hired Dave Fortman as their producer, and have demoed 30 songs... a dozen of which Taylor hopes makes it onto the band's final disc. "We've all communicated back and forth, even when Slipknot was on the road," he said. "That's why we're so ready with material. Everyone has contributed greatly, and with any luck, this album should be even better than the first one."

**DISTURBED:** Some fans have expressed sur-



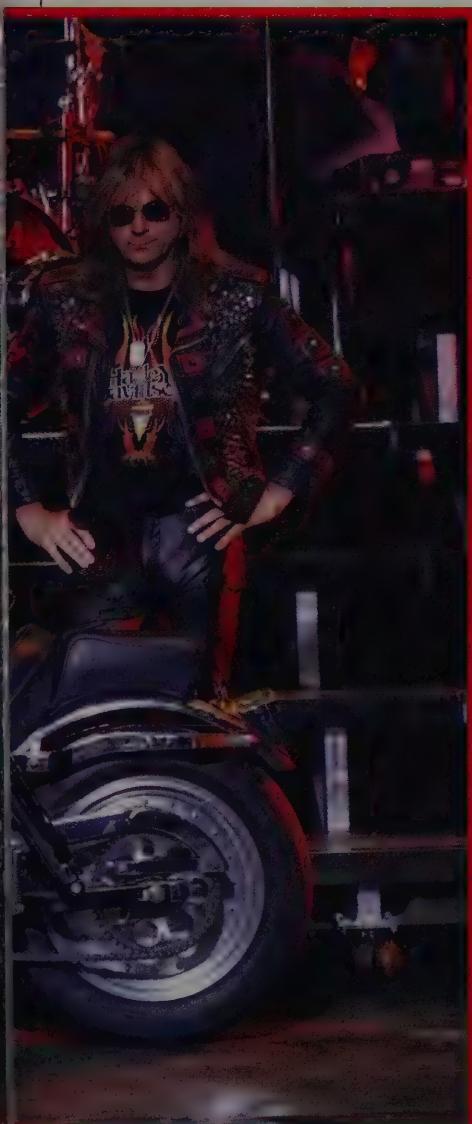
Judas Priest: Questions remain.

## BREAKING NEWS

BY LOU O'NEILL, JR.

prise about how long it took Disturbed to gear up a major tour following the chart-topping appearance of **Ten Thousand Fists**. Sure, they're now headlining the prestigious Jagermeister road outing, and plans for a massive, spring *Music as a Weapon* tour are already underway. But when the group kicked off their road schedule playing tiny clubs, some among their fan base were outwardly concerned... much to the apparent amusement of vocalist David Draiman. "That is rather funny," he said. "I didn't know anyone was worried about us! We were hoping the reaction would be one of pleasure concerning the chance to see us up close, before we started playing much bigger places."

**DEFTONES:** The Deftones are keeping mighty busy these days. In addition to the release of their two-disc "B-sides" collection, **Rarities & Covers**, the band is hard at work on a new disc that they hope to have out early in 2006. "We always intended to have all this stuff come out at the same time," said vocalist Chino Moreno. "It's not a problem for us, so I hope it won't be a problem for anyone else."



**ON DEADLINE:** YOUR VETERAN scribbler is just back from Europe with so much to share, it's amazing. But, let's jump to **GODSMACK**. It's just crossed the Rock Wire and it's good news if you're a fan of the band. This time, Sully and his pals passed on Miami and the new album is being recorded, as you read this, in Boston. It's nearly three years now since **Faceless** made the world pay attention to **GODSMACK**—so—it's been a spell.

Bottom line: work on the new album is proceeding quite well. The guys are recording in the day and going home (like normal people?) in the night. Still, they are far from finished. Our guess is that the yet-to-be-named project will be wrapped in the next month or two. Stay tuned.

**FLASH:** The **DISTURBED**/Jagermeister tour is now cooking thru your town and it has to be judged as a monstrous success. David Draiman sure brought plenty to the table with **Ten Thousand Fists**. It rocketed straight to No. 1 on the national charts. Sources say that new bassist, John Moyer, is blending in well. And what about the cover of the CD!!! Artist Todd McFarlane must have been in a strange head space when he whipped this puppy up! The dude's previously worked with Korn and Pearl Jam on wildly successful projects. **DISTURBED** is starting to sell a serious amount of product and it can only go up from here!!! Ready for a breakout to the next level? We emphatically cheer yes!

**QUICKIE QUIZ:** Last month, we asked you to name the only state in America that begins with two vowels. We also asked Corey Taylor to butt out! Correct ans.: Iowa. It was said to be named after a young beautiful Indian woman from days long gone. That's interesting, now, true or false??? The Dr. Pepper we enjoy day and night, well...it stands to reason there really was a "Doctor Pepper." Is this factual or not? Correct ans.: Next month.

**ROCK WIRE REPORT:** Everyone seems to be wondering will they or won't they in 2006? To be specific, will Ozzy Osbourne record all new material with his original mates from Black Sabbath? Ozzy has re-upped with Epic so it's not like he needs to do it. We think all of Sabbath might have trepidation trying to recapture "the sound" that basically gave birth to what we now call heavy metal. 'Dems tall, tall boots to fill. Incidentally, wonder what Ozzy is going to do when he and the band are nominated (again) for the Rock 'n' Roll Hall of Fame in Cleveland? Betcha' Mr. O goes whack-a-ding-hoy when the names are announced. Is it just us or did anyone notice that

the immortal jazz star Miles Davis was nominated this year to the Rock 'n' Roll Hall Of Fame??? Miles Davis? Someone dropped the ball here big time...A special wish celebrating his birthday to the genius of Kurt Cobain. Believe it or not, he would have been 39 on the 20th of February. Hanging out with Kurt at Rock in Rio in the early 90's was an unforgettable experience. Wherever your spirit may live on, Kurt, we miss you and hope you are finally at peace...Speaking



of Cobain, did you know that Courtney Love has signed on to portray Linda Lovelace in the upcoming remake of *Deep Throat*???—Well, it's true. No comment, please...Atlantic seems to be pulling out all the stops with the new **Darkness** disc. The label's poohbahs are puffing that **One Way Ticket To Hell...And Back** will be "our biggest release of the year." Talk about going out-on-a-limb. We'll wait and see. Still, we like what we hear.

**OVER 'N' OUT:** Your intrepid reporter has just returned from Zurich for our annual trip around the continent. Paris, Evian (like the water) and Germany were fine, but it's Switzerland's biggest city where it all seems to be happening. The town is rocking hard seven nights per week. Countless young people are flooding in from all over Europe. Changing gears to finances—since we were in the land of three dollar Cokes and six dollar beers, we couldn't help but ask the all-knowing "Phantom Of Forch" how the world's markets were shaping up for 2006? The financial guru creased his eyebrow and sternly advised that, "America's economy is like a balloon that keeps getting bigger and bigger with never a sign it might burst. But of course, it must and maybe sooner than many believe!!!" Hmmm...was "the Phantom" serious? This international expert in banking just shrugged his shoulders and walked away. Yes, evidently it's that serious!!!

# DISTURBED

## HOT & BOTHERED

BY TERRY ARNOLD

**D**isturbed are once again ready to take on the world! With the immediate acclaim heaped upon their chart-topping third album, **Ten Thousand Fists**, vocalist David Draiman, guitarist Dan Donegan and drummer Mike Wengren sense that they're sitting atop a smoking keg of rock and roll dynamite. And when that sucker explodes, they're ready to ride the rocket straight to the pinnacle of the rock pile. They've done it before with each of their two previous discs, **The Sickness** and **Believe** (which have sold a combined total of over 5 million copies), and now they're more-than-ready to do it again! Recently we caught up with the informative and introspective Mr. Draiman to get the inside scoop on everything this Chicago based hard rock unit has in store for the music scene in 2006.

**Hit Parader:** Many people— both fans and the media— have commented on the "anger" that fills so many of the songs on **Ten Thousand Fists**.

**David Draiman:** It's definitely a more angry record than **Believe** was. But, at the same time, it's our most diverse album, as well. I hope that some of these songs serve as a rallying cry for a lot of people who look around and find themselves frustrated, hurt, and yes, angry about what they see going on in the world that surrounds them. There are certain events in the world that are a cause for anger, and a number of these songs are designed to lash out at those events.

**HP:** Which specific world events have recently captured your attention?

**DD:** Most prominently, the on-going war in Iraq. Songs like *Sacred Lie* and *Forgiven* are aimed at that subject quite pointedly. I've always tried to write my lyrics from a very specific point-of-view, and in this case that perspective portrays the total futility of war. There are lives being lost every day— on both sides of the conflict— and I think any sensible person would be hard pressed to tell you exactly why this is happening. We've all heard the rhetoric, but the realities are quite a bit different. But please don't mistake my approach on these songs as being anti-military. I am an incredible supporter of our troops. Conversely, I am staunchly anti-war.

**HP:** We know that you utilize a snippet of a President Bush speech at the start of *Deify*. What are your views of how the president is handling the War in Iraq?

**DD:** Obviously, I have my opinions on the war, but that doesn't necessarily reflect on how I view the president. George W. Bush is who he is— nothing more, nothing less. You can agree with him, or you can disagree, but the fact is that when you looked at the election map back in November, 2004, and saw all those "red" states, you couldn't mistake the fact that a vast portion of this nation voted their support for the man. He was attributed by those people with God-like powers... he was deified.

**HP:** The other theme that seems to run throughout the album is one concerning relationships... mostly *failed* relationships.

**DD:** (Laughing) That would be true. For whatever reason, I seem to find it much more compelling to write about a failed relationship than one that has gone well. Obviously, the anger and frustration generated by a failed relationship is much more comfortable to us in terms of our aggressive musical attitude. *Stricken* certainly touches on that subject. I think most of us have had the experience of someone coming into our lives and turning it upside down. It's almost like you've contracted some kind of disease that you can't get rid of, no matter how hard you try. It can be both devastating and debilitating.

**HP:** Many people have seen the title **Ten Thousand Fists** as a microcosm of a Disturbed concert audience. How soon do you figure to be playing arenas on this tour?

**DD:** The song *Ten Thousand Fists* is about the unity and strength an audience can feel at a great rock concert. There is a feeling of elation as all these separate people from different places, leading different lives are all drawn together into a unified mass sharing a single experience. It really doesn't matter if that audience is 100 people or 10,000 people— that kind of magic can still happen. But to answer your question, we started out in smaller venues with our tours this time, but by summer we hope to be playing in front of much larger crowds.

**HP:** **Ten Thousand Fists** seems like it's the next logical step for Disturbed in terms of your musical evolution.

**DD:** That's exactly what it is... but it was never specifically planned to be that. Everything we did for this album was all very organic; there was never a methodical attempt to introduce familiar elements from the previous albums into this music. We just started writing, and ended up with 19 songs that captured all the energy and passion that we wanted. We decided to include 14 tracks on the final album— which is two more than we've ever done before. There were things that were familiar— like the return of the staccato singing style that I first utilized on **The Sickness**— and there were new elements, perhaps most notably Dan's willingness to inject guitar solos into many of the songs.

**HP:** Has the response to **Ten Thousand Fists** surprised you in any way?

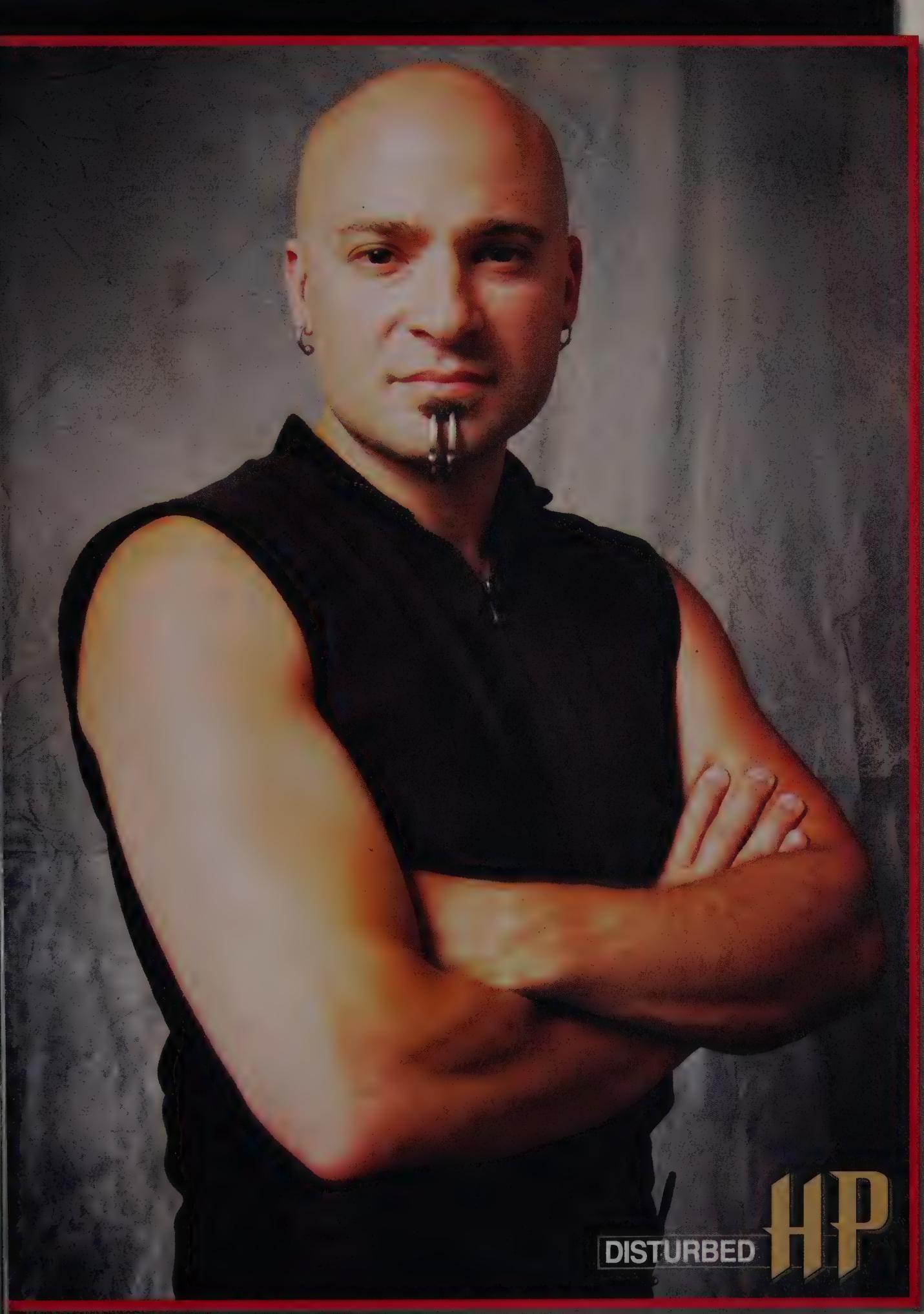
**DD:** You never know for sure how people will

**"I hope these songs serve as a rallying cry for a lot of people."**

respond to what you create. It's one of the most fascinating aspects of being an artist. You spend months of your life creating something you believe is special, then you wait to see how people react. We pour so much of ourselves into the making of an album. It's always a very labor-intensive, and at times a tedious procedure to make sure that these songs come out just the way we want them to. But I'd have to say that more work went into this one than either of the other two. As an example, the song writing for **Believe** lasted for about 5 months. For this one, it went on for almost a year.

**HP:** Do you take great pleasure when you read positive reviews of what you've created?

**DD:** Of course. But to be honest, I derive even greater satisfaction from a fan who comes up to me and says that a song on one of our albums, or a concert of ours that they attended, had an impact on their life. I'm even more moved when I hear that soldiers preparing to go into battle listen to Disturbed in order to get ready. If our music can bring a degree of fearlessness and strength to soldiers, I can not be more proud.



DISTURBED

D P

It's been an amazing couple of years for the Darkness, a time filled with hits, hopes and dreams as well as more than a few frustrations and disappointments. Back in mid-2004 it appeared as if this English retro-rock unit was on the verge of becoming 21st

Century Superstars. But due to an internal shake-up at their record label and the ever-shifting whims of rock and roll fortune, things didn't go exactly as planned for vocalist/guitarist Justin Hawkins, guitarist Dan Hawkins, drummer Ed Graham and new bassist Richie Edwards. They seemed to hit the proverbial wall with the release of their second single, *Growing On Me*, after their initial track, *I Believe in a Thing Called Love*, had helped turn their album, *Permission to Land*, into an international sensation. But undeterred, these boys have continued to rock on, leaving in their wake a trail of sweating, satisfied customers from London to L.A. It's all now culminated in the release of the band's eagerly anticipated second disc, *One Way Ticket to Hell... And Back*, which makes titular reference to the ups and downs that characterized this unit's headline-grabbing initial run through the rock battle field (including a brief period in 2005 when the band had ostensibly broken apart). Recently we spoke to Justin Hawkins about the rock and roll saga known far-and-wide as the Darkness.

**"Even though this album took a little more time to come together, we all knew it would be great."**

came to an almost complete stop. I don't want to point any fingers because it won't do any good. What happened can't be changed. *Growing On Me* never got the kind of response we had hoped for, and with so many changes going on at the record label, it was kind of like going back to Step One. Thankfully, *Permission to Land* had already sold more than 500,000 copies in the States by then, so at least we felt as if we had accomplished something—though it was much less than we had hoped for.

**HP: It sounds like you're kind of ticked off at the people at your record label.**

**JH:** I guess that would be fair to say. It's not a question of competence, it's more an issue of us knowing what's best for us. A lot of people can say that they're "experts" in marketing, promotion, whatever. But when it comes to the Darkness, we are the only true experts. We tend to leave a lot of important decisions to the people at the record labels, but perhaps we're going to have to become a little more assertive when it comes to this album. We may have to tell them which songs we think best represent this band and what we're trying to accomplish. We know that we have a long-term relationship with those people, so perhaps they should better understand what we want, and we should better understand what they want.

**HP: You mention your privacy issues back home in England. Tell us more about those.**

**JH:** Please understand, we all are very aware that a certain degree of that just goes along with being in a successful band. We love it when we're on magazine covers, or on television, because that's exactly where we want to be. We want our faces and our music to be everywhere. But when it crosses the line, and you have paparazzi photographers hiding in the shrubbery around your home, and they're following you as you walk around town, it can become a

# THE DARKNESS

## HELL AWAITS

BY WILLIAM BAKER

**Hit Parader:** So... *One Way Ticket to Hell... And Back*. We're intrigued. What's the story behind the title?

**Justin Hawkins:** Nothing that mysterious—it's just the way we feel. We've gone through a hell of a lot in our brief career... and we've lived to tell about it. That about sums it up, don't you think? And anyway, it's got a nice rock and roll "feel" to it.

**HP:** Hey, *Highway to Hell* worked pretty well for AC/DC.

**JH:** (laughing) That would be quite true. If this album proves to be a fraction as successful for us as that one was for them, then I don't believe there will be any complaints. But huge sales are not necessarily what this album is about. It's about taking out some of our frustrations and putting them into the music we make.

**HP:** Tell us about some of those frustrations.

**JH:** They range from the incredible invasions of our privacy we feel back home in England to the manner in which our career has gone in America. We really felt we were on our way to the top over here a few years ago when *I Believe in a Thing Called Love* was all over the radio and MTV. It even crossed over to get onto different radio formats, which from what I'm told is a very big deal. But then things

bit much. We know that it all goes with the territory. If you want to be a rock star, you have to accept a lot of intrusions. But some people—especially back home in England—have crossed the line, and I'm not scared to call them out on it. I'll go toe-to-toe with them in the street any time they want it.

**HP: Would you prefer things to remain more low-key in America?**

**JH:** No, not at all. We want this band to be huge everywhere! I want people stopping me in the street as I stroll through an American city. I crave that kind of attention—it must be some kind of personality disorder! It's happened a few times already, but not enough to satisfy me. I want fans to stop me; I just don't want it to be a bleeding paparazzi! So far, I haven't found the American press to be quite as bad as the European press; over

there they'll make up some very nasty stuff about you. I think they're just trying to draw some kind of a reaction. I said before that I'd take any of them on, and I meant it. But I also know that if I did, it would be on the front page of every tabloid in England the next morning.

**HP: Do you think that American fans got a proper view of the Darkness your first time around?**

**JH:** Yes... and no. We certainly have our detractors, and that's fine with us. That was always something we expected and in a certain sense, something we wanted. But we also want people to come out and see us, and realize that we're more than the one song on the radio and the one video they see on their television. People everywhere—whether it's America, England or Japan—have the right to view us however they wish. But if they do try to dismiss us, I think they're making a huge mistake.

**HP: Did you write the material for *One Way Ticket to Hell...* when you were on the road, or when you were back home?**

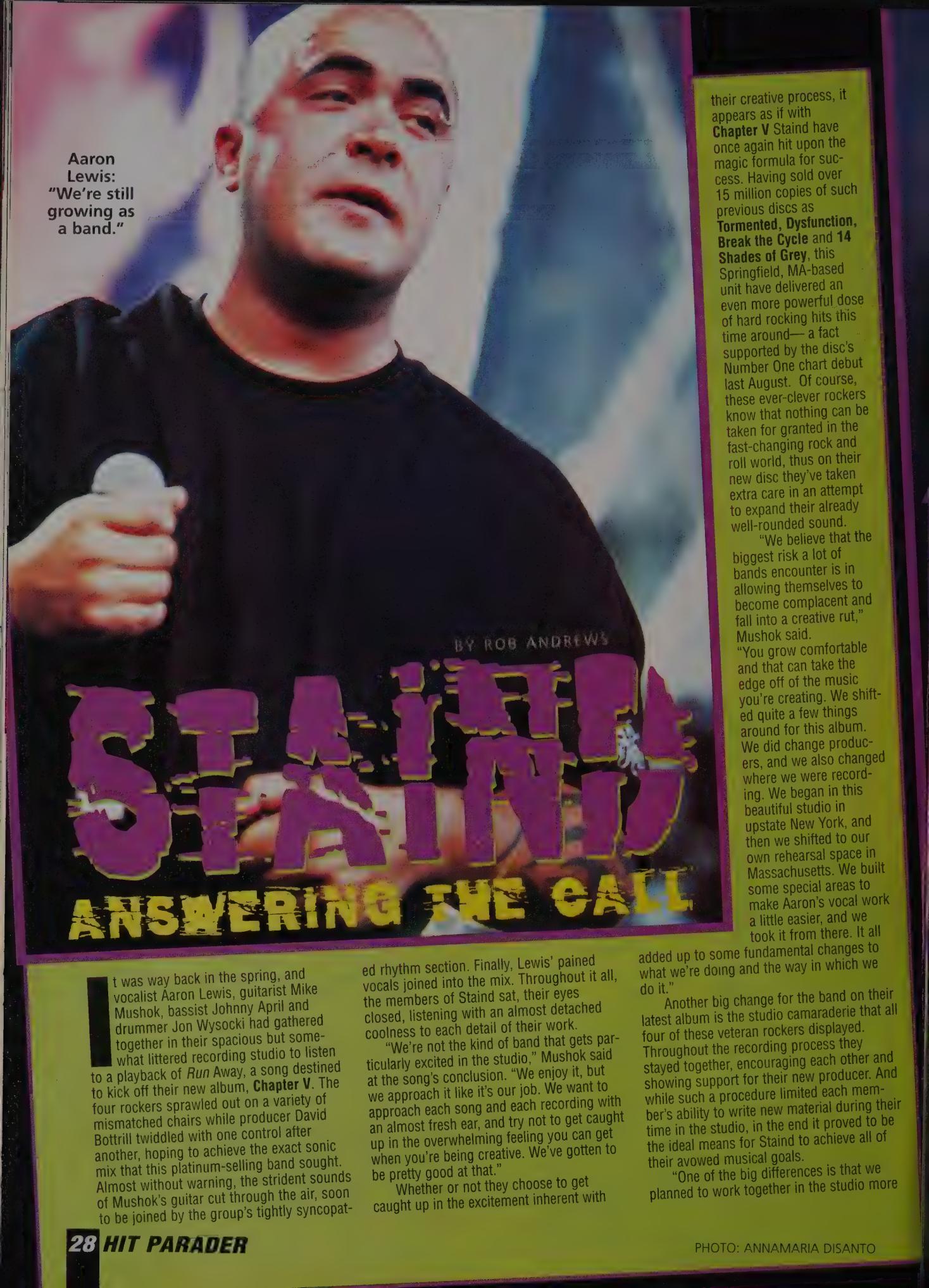
**JH:** What I find happens is that some of the material you might think is brilliant when you're on the road simply doesn't sound anywhere near as good when you've had the chance to get some rest and gain a little perspective on it. That's why I much prefer to wait and write a lot of songs when we're off the road. Writing has never been a particular problem for this band, so even though this album took a little more time than we wanted to come together, we all knew it would be great.

**"We've gone through a hell of a lot in our brief career."**



JUSTIN HAWKINS

HP



Aaron Lewis:  
"We're still  
growing as  
a band."

BY ROB ANDREWS

# STAIND ANSWERING THE CALL

It was way back in the spring, and vocalist Aaron Lewis, guitarist Mike Mushok, bassist Johnny April and drummer Jon Wysocki had gathered together in their spacious but somewhat littered recording studio to listen to a playback of *Run Away*, a song destined to kick off their new album, **Chapter V**. The four rockers sprawled out on a variety of mismatched chairs while producer David Bottrill twiddled with one control after another, hoping to achieve the exact sonic mix that this platinum-selling band sought. Almost without warning, the strident sounds of Mushok's guitar cut through the air, soon to be joined by the group's tightly syncopat-

ed rhythm section. Finally, Lewis' pained vocals joined into the mix. Throughout it all, the members of Staind sat, their eyes closed, listening with an almost detached coolness to each detail of their work.

"We're not the kind of band that gets particularly excited in the studio," Mushok said at the song's conclusion. "We enjoy it, but we approach it like it's our job. We want to approach each song and each recording with an almost fresh ear, and try not to get caught up in the overwhelming feeling you can get when you're being creative. We've gotten to be pretty good at that."

Whether or not they choose to get caught up in the excitement inherent with

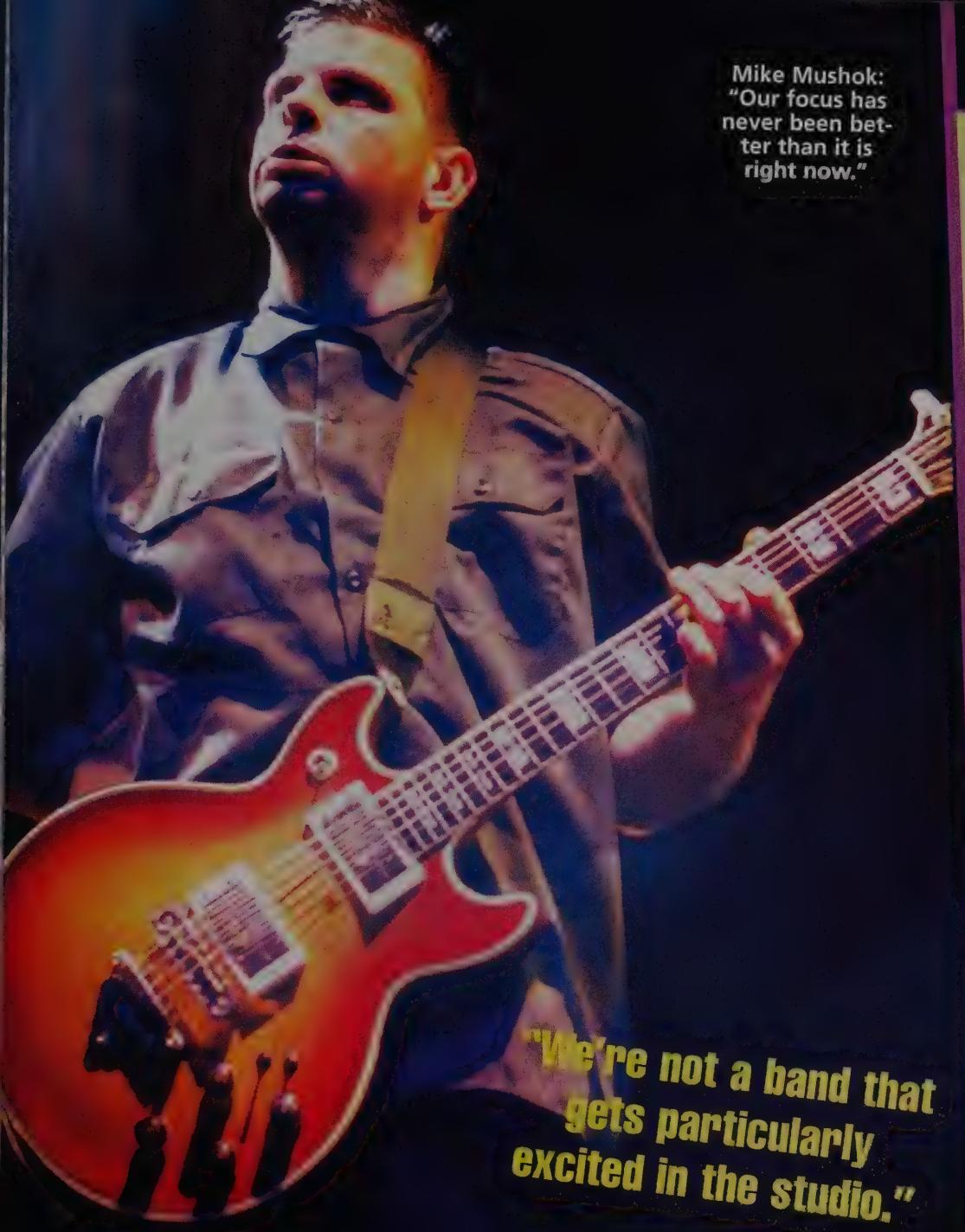
their creative process, it appears as if with **Chapter V** Staind have once again hit upon the magic formula for success. Having sold over 15 million copies of such previous discs as **Tormented**, **Dysfunction**, **Break the Cycle** and **14 Shades of Grey**, this Springfield, MA-based unit have delivered an even more powerful dose of hard rocking hits this time around—a fact supported by the disc's Number One chart debut last August. Of course, these ever-clever rockers know that nothing can be taken for granted in the fast-changing rock and roll world, thus on their new disc they've taken extra care in an attempt to expand their already well-rounded sound.

"We believe that the biggest risk a lot of bands encounter is in allowing themselves to become complacent and fall into a creative rut," Mushok said. "You grow comfortable and that can take the edge off of the music you're creating. We shifted quite a few things around for this album. We did change producers, and we also changed where we were recording. We began in this beautiful studio in upstate New York, and then we shifted to our own rehearsal space in Massachusetts. We built some special areas to make Aaron's vocal work a little easier, and we took it from there. It all

added up to some fundamental changes to what we're doing and the way in which we do it."

Another big change for the band on their latest album is the studio camaraderie that all four of these veteran rockers displayed. Throughout the recording process they stayed together, encouraging each other and showing support for their new producer. And while such a procedure limited each member's ability to write new material during their time in the studio, in the end it proved to be the ideal means for Staind to achieve all of their avowed musical goals.

"One of the big differences is that we planned to work together in the studio more



**Mike Mushok:**  
"Our focus has  
never been bet-  
ter than it is  
right now."

Mushok said. "I think you need that in order to make great music. You have to feel that you're being pushed by yourself, by your bandmates, by the fans, by outside forces in order to keep trying to do something new and different. You want to maintain that diversity and make sure that fans who like your heavy side, as well as fans who've enjoyed your hits, are satisfied. It's a delicate balancing act at times, but Aaron tends to write brilliant acoustic songs, and I tend to write the heavier ones. We have that natural balance which makes things work very well."

One potential pitfall that faces Staind in the wake of **Chapter V**'s success is a degree of lingering uncertainty surrounding their record label. Since the release of **14 Shades of Grey** back in 2003, the group's original label, Elektra Entertainment, has been ostensibly eliminated following the sale of Warner Music. While on the surface these guys seem to feel confident that their new business "partners," Atlantic Records, will pick up where their previous associates left off, there's no question that a period of transition may be at hand.

**"We're not a band that gets particularly excited in the studio."**

than we had in the past—and that's exactly what we did," Mushok said. "On the more recent albums we'd kind of show up when we were needed. It wasn't that we weren't interested in what everyone else was doing, it's more that we were busy on our own with writing or taking care of other necessary business. But on this album, we were determined to be there for as much of the recording process as possible. Another important factor was that we had a new producer in David, and we thought it was very important for us all to be there to make sure that we all understood what we wanted to accomplish."

Being willing to break successful formu-

las in the pursuit of something new comes rather naturally for Staind. It's been that way throughout this group's decade-long career and shows no signs of slowing down in 2006. These guys know that it is the duality of their approach—where hard rocking hits have been followed by even more successful acoustic interludes—that has marked them as one of the most diverse and successful bands of their era. Now, as they continue to tour the world in support of their fifth disc, it seems as if the eyes and ears of the rock world are attuned to everything that Staind says, does and plays.

"Despite what we've accomplished, we still feel just as much pressure as ever,"

for both the group and their label. For his part, Mushok is willing to adopt a wait-and-see attitude.

"We're still waiting to find out how everything that's gone on at the label will impact us," the guitarist said. "There have been a lot of changes. Maybe only two or three people we know are now left from before. It's a very strange feeling. But for the moment at least, our focus is on promoting the album and letting the label do what they need to do in order to support it. We have no reason to believe they can't do it. But what's happened at Elektra seems to be indicative of what's happening throughout the music industry. It's scary out there."

# "We're a heavy band, but not your typical heavy band."

BY TOM LONG

Taproot have never recognized any of the supposed creative "limits" imposed by the hard rock world. Fact is, vocalist Stephen Richards, guitarist Michael DeWolf, bassist Philip Lipscomb and drummer Jarrod Montague have always taken particular pleasure in pushing those bounds to their furthest extremes, a notion once again boldly in evidence on this unit's third release, **Blue-Sky Research**. Here mind-sticking melodies blend with thought-provoking lyrics and unexpected musical twists to deliver some of the freshest rock and roll sounds of the year. Featuring such songs as *Calling* and *Violent Seas* (the latter being one of three new tracks the band co-wrote with the renowned Billy Corgan) on their latest effort—which comes three years after their breakout release, **Welcome**—Taproot continue to not only expand their artistic playing field, but to do so in their own highly distinctive fashion.

"Here's all you need to know about us," Richards said with an impish grin. "We're heavy enough to be invited to play at two different *Ozzfests*, but we were the only band on the bill that wore all white. We're definitely a heavy band—but not your typical heavy band. We're musicians and songwriters first, a heavy band next. We like to think we combine it all to emerge with

something that's distinctly Taproot."

Despite the recent string of successes that Taproot have enjoyed, their path to the top has been suitably strange. Even before their major label debut album, **Gift**, first introduced this hard rocking quartet to the music community back in 2000, this Michigan-based unit had dealt with an almost dizzying array of career ups and downs... most notably a major rift with then-industry tastemaker Fred Durst of Limp Bizkit. But despite the often roller-coaster nature of their early existence, this expressly melodic, yet eminently intense band has managed to maintain a certain wide-eyed innocence towards their lot in rock and roll life that is simultaneously refreshing and surprising.

"This album is a lot more expansive," Richards said. "We've opened our ears to everything from what's happening out there on the hard rock scene to older stuff like Pink Floyd. I've found myself listening to some stuff recently that I *never* would have imagined that I'd like... and it has had an influence on this music."

With their latest disc being hailed in some quarters as one of 2005's most "eagerly anticipated" releases, it would seem that neither the passing of time, nor the band's on-going battle for recognition,

has done much to dent Taproot's dedication to the rock and roll cause. In the case of this unit, for every fight they've waged and difficulty they've overcome, there's been an important lesson learned. And now with **Blue-Sky Research** once again showcasing this band's unique qualities, Taproot have clearly proven their metal mettle, further establishing themselves as one of the most exciting and entertaining bands on the contemporary music scene.

In fact, with the success of their latest release, this adventurous foursome seem well on their way to making a big name for themselves among heavy rock's top-tier groups. Blending metallic instrumental fury with staccato riffs, fast-paced melodies and gut-pounding rhythms, on their new songs Taproot have shown that they possess a sound and style that's tailor-made for today's hard rock scene. Clearly, despite the rocky path they've traversed to reach their present status, this is one band determined to make the most of their ever-improving career opportunities.

"There's an attitude to our music that I think is really interesting," Richards said. "One of the things that has always hit me in our songs are the real cool melodies. That's what draws you in. Once we've gotten you that far—you're ours!"

# TAPROOT

# ROARING BACK

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**A**udioslave are certainly keeping busy. Just six months after the band hit the top of the charts with the release of their second disc, *Out of Exile*, vocalist Chris Cornell, bassist Tim Commerford, guitarist Tom Morello and drummer Brad Wilk are back at it with a new release, *Live in Cuba*. As the titles connote, this double-disc, CD/DVD set captures all the excitement and unpredictability that surrounded the band's historic May 6, 2005 concert in Havana, Cuba—the first Cuban performance by an American rock act in over 50 years! Amidst the politically-charged intrigue and wall-shaking musical odes, Audioslave proved themselves to be both master blasters and master diplomats, serenading the 60,000 fans that had gathered to hear them in Havana's Anti-Imperialist Plaza with a mix of Audioslave favorites, along with select tracks from their past associations in Rage Against the Machine and Soundgarden. All-in-all, it was an experience that none of this Gang Of Four will ever forget—a fact we recently discussed with Morello.

**Hit Parader:** How did your show in Cuba rate among your career highlight?

**Tom Morello:** It was definitely one of the highlights of my life. It was such a thrill to be there, and to be so warmly embraced by tens of thousands of fans. It proved once again that music can break down barriers that politics often can not. Those people were so appreciative to have us there, and we were just as appreciative to have the opportunity to perform for them. And, what was even better is that the U.S. Treasury Department helped put the show together—despite the fact that it was performed in Anti-Imperialist Square, a place that was built five years ago expressly to hold mass demonstrations *against* U.S. policies. There is a lot of irony in that.

became a band. But we've made the best of it—and provided the fans with some interesting music in the process.

**HP:** *Live In Cuba* seems to bring back some of the political rhetoric that marked so much of your work with Rage Against the Machine.

**TM:** Well, in some ways it does. Playing in Cuba may have been a political statement, but our music doesn't really express many political sentiments. This is obviously a different band than Rage was. I still have my beliefs and the causes that I support, which is why I formed the Axis of Justice with Serge Tankian from System of a Down. That's my outlet for my beliefs. But this band isn't the forum through which I always express my political thoughts. Chris is involved in writing the lyrics for our songs, so it's mostly his sentiments and beliefs that are expressed, and I'm totally fine with

# THEIR TIME HAS COME AUDIOSLAVE

BY PATRICK JAMES

**"This band is totally honest and real in what it presents."**

**HP:** Was there any concern that the "sheltered" Cuban population wouldn't know that much about Audioslave?

**TM:** Absolutely. We knew that radio from Miami and other southern U.S. cities gets into Cuba to some extent, but we had no idea how many people knew anything about us or our music. We didn't know if anyone would show up. It could have been a disaster. But not only did 60,000 people turn out—many of them knew the words to the songs! It was totally incredible to watch them react to what we were doing. At one point in the show, they actually formed a mosh pit in front of the stage.

**HP:** How do you react to those who state that the show was merely an attempt to raise Audioslave's public profile?

**TM:** (smiling) I guess people can say anything they want. We knew there might be some people that would look somewhat askance at us playing in Cuba, considering that the United States still maintains a cultural embargo with that country, but those people obviously don't share some of our beliefs. That's fine. I'm sure that some people will also find it somewhat "ironic" that we had film crews documenting the event, and sound crews recording it. There was no master plan to release that concert as a CD/DVD package. But it was an interesting enough event—and a good enough show, thankfully—to warrant such treatment.

**HP:** *Live in Cuba* comes out on the label that released your first album, *not* the label that released *Out of Exile*.

**TM:** Everyone seems satisfied with this arrangement. Both labels get to share in what we are doing. Obviously, this is an unusual arrangement that dates back to contracts that existed before we

that. This band is totally honest and real in what it presents, just as Rage Against the Machine was honest in what it presented. To me that's the most important thing.

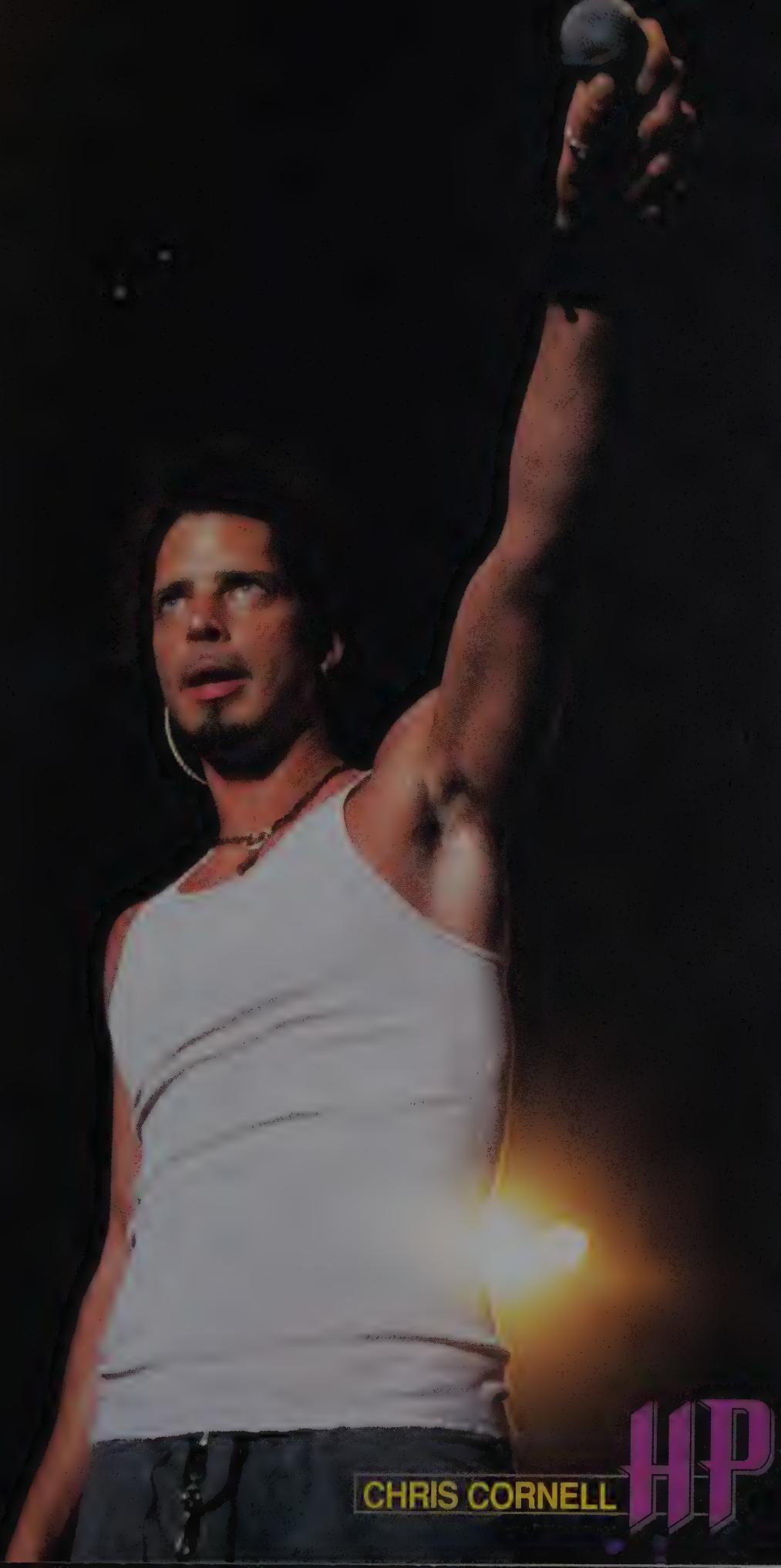
**HP:** There are a smattering of Soundgarden and Rage songs on these discs. Were there any second thoughts to having those live recordings come out at this time?

**TM:** Not really. We've been playing some of those songs live on this tour, so we felt that to properly document the Cuban show, they needed to be included. They're part of us. We didn't feel comfortable doing that prior to this tour. We're all very proud of the music we've created over the years, and we have every right to play it. Now that we're headlining shows and playing for two hours, we have time to feature some of those songs as well as the material from

**Audioslave** and **Out of Exile**. With Chris singing some of the Rage songs, there's a different twist to them—just as there is when we play the Soundgarden songs. But the crowd seems to really love it, and that's very important to us. We're definitely not hiding from our pasts.

**HP:** How satisfied have you been to the world's reaction to *Out of Exile*?

**TM:** It's been amazing. It justifies everything that we accomplished with **Audioslave** and takes it to the next level. We had all enjoyed our taste of success with our previous bands, and perhaps that initial introduction to success was more overwhelming and surprising, but it was no more satisfying than what we've experienced with these two albums. To know that we have created something special, and that the fans had responded so amazingly, has been incredibly satisfying.



CHRIS CORNELL

HP



# CRANKING IT UP

BY AMY SCIARRETTA

**"This  
is a  
fresh  
start  
in our  
career."**

34 HIT PARADER

**G**host Reveries sews together many complicated parts, and it features the full-time addition of keyboardist Per Wiberg, which allows the band to experiment with new sonic opportunities and to avoid repeating themselves. Further illustrating their forward thinking, the band rearranged old material to accommodate their newest member in the live arena.

The new album is melancholic, with a sense of longing, which is part and parcel of Opeth's core sound, but there's a note of hope that is woven through the album. Lindgren sums it up effectively, saying, "The first couple of albums, up to *Morningrise*, are like Part 1 of Opeth. Then part 2 is *Stilllife* and *Blackwater Park* through *Deliverance*. *Damnation* is the bridge to the new era of Opeth, to now."

Akerfeldt echoes the sentiment, saying,

Opeth don't write songs. They don't simply make albums. These Swedes create mini symphonies that are an alloy of rock, prog, death metal, and Swedish folk. Singer/guitarist Mikael Akerfeldt says of his band's eighth album, the lush *Ghost Reveries*, "You should be pretty far from being able to grasp what you just heard after just one listen."

**G**host Reveries is a complex, layered and rewarding listen. Metal fans and critics alike have hailed the almighty Opeth as "The Pink Floyd Of Metal," claiming Opeth are one of the best bands ever, and some go so far as to herald Akerfeldt as a guitar deity. Opeth effectively reconcile precise technicality with beating heart human-ness. The music is played with skill and talent, but there is an emotional element coursing through every note, as well. Every album, from the breath-stealing *Blackwater Park* or the yin-yang companion pieces, the hard 'n' heavy *Deliverance* and the acoustic, contemplative *Damnation*, is so vivid, that you can actually envision Akerfeldt's nimble hands moving across the fretboard of his guitar.

You will feel an entire range of emotions when listening to *Ghost Reveries*, which has dynamic new soundscapes that you've never heard before on any Opeth record. Leave it to Opeth to reinvent themselves yet again, all the while retaining the brutal vs. beautiful style that has made them a fixture on the underground metal scene for the past several years. Now that they've partnered up with Roadrunner Records, Opeth are in the plum position to bring their music to the rest of the world, and to expose the unknowing to their greatness. Opeth have been label journeymen over the years, but they've finally settled into a new, long-term home. "Most bands put out a few albums, peak, and then go down, and eventually reform," says guitarist Peter Lindgren. "We're still on the way up and we signed to the biggest label we've ever been to. It's like a fresh start."

"We've got a new label, a new member, and it's like a comeback album, although we have never been gone." As for the songwriting process on *Ghost Reveries*, Akerfeldt, who recently became a father, says, "I didn't want to leave anything open with the arrangements of the songs. I paid attention to detail, I wanted to make it clash. I wanted it to be a bit uplifting. All the parts in the songs have a purpose; they mean something even if to get you to the next part. I made sure on the new album in the early phases of writing the songs that there is no filler. Every part, every second has a meaning to the song."

Akerfeldt admits that it's not easy to classify Opeth—are they death metal or are they prog or are they both? "Everything is a subgenre of rock. It's not any of these styles. I can't describe accurately what we sound like," he says. "They have to develop a new category to explain what we sound like."

He's certainly right about that. Opeth use many textures in their lengthy, involved compositions. Akerfeldt admits that writing long songs is what comes natural to him and it's how he has developed as a songwriter. Further commenting on the songs that populate *Ghost Reveries*, Akerfeldt says that he loves *Isolation Years*, the haunting lingering ballad that closes the album. Conversely, there's the downright foreboding *Grand Conjuration*, which Akerfeldt describes as "evil, evil, evil. I deliberately wanted to make it evil." Everything about the song, from the lyrics, to the riffery, to the way Akerfeldt sing-talks, will leave a deep chill in your bone while making the baby fine hairs on your neck stand bolt upright. *Baying Of The Hounds* features a major, clean vocal line that they've never tried. The result, according to Mr. Akerfeldt, is "a new dimension to the Opeth sound." Another change on this go round was recording at Fascination Street Studios, with Jens Borgen engineering and mixing, as opposed to Porcupine Tree's Steven Wilson, who produced the last three Opeth opuses.

# CRANKING IT UP

While the change was initially scary, Akerfeldt concedes that the transition forced him to be more confident.

With Opeth, and *Ghost Reveries*, you get a musical landscape dotted with so much, it requires several listens to absorb it all. But it's a gift that keeps on giving. You find a new nuance of sound each time. "Whatever your musical background, if you are a music lover, if you pick up an Opeth CD, there is a good chance it could change your whole musical life, or so I hope," Akerfeldt says without an ounce of conceit in his voice. "The reason I say this is not because I am cocky. But you cannot dismiss Opeth. It's not elitist thinking on my part, either. It's just that there is so much in there that someone interested in music will find something they like."



OPETH **HP**

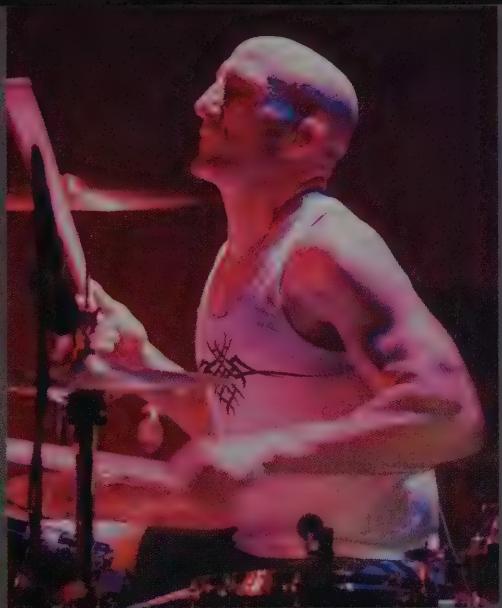
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**W**

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# COMIN' AT YOU

SAME QUESTION, DIFFERENT BANDS

BY AMY SCIARRETTA

**F**or this edition of *Coming At You*, we decided to ask musicians what their favorite metal albums of all time are. We're going to let them do all the talking this time out...since they're all so passionate about their metal. Here's our random sampling...

## THE DRESDEN DOLLS', BRIAN VIGLIONE

The Dresden Dolls were handpicked by Mr. Trent Reznor to warm up the crowds on NIN's spring 2005 tour. While the Dolls play a very cabaret style of music, not something most metalheads dig, drummer Brian Viglione is a metalhead at heart, he cites the great metal forefathers as influences on his style and offered us his five fave metal platters. "My band allows me to incorporate every aspect of my personality into the music and performance, without feeling that I've compromised myself. My only other band mate is also my best friend and with her, I get to travel the world, playing music I love, and meet all kinds of people who need music in their lives as badly as I do."

### \*Pantera's Vulgar Display Of Power

"This record is like a time capsule for the best memories I have of my friends growing up; jamming on these songs in my attic."

### \*Slayer's Decade Of Aggression

"Some of my favorite records are live albums because of the 'close your eyes and you're there' element. This is quintessential. If you haven't accessed you're psychopathic tendencies yet, play this record on 10 to help you along. You don't even have to play it backwards. Uplifting moment: Tom Araya's spiel to the crowd before *War Ensemble*. Good man."

### \*Ozzy Osbourne's Tribute

"Call me a 'classicism,' but I have to give props to those who showed me the way. From the *Carmina Burana* intro to the *Dee* out-takes, this is a great musical friendship captured on tape. Anyone for bat head?"

### \*Iron Maiden's Live After Death

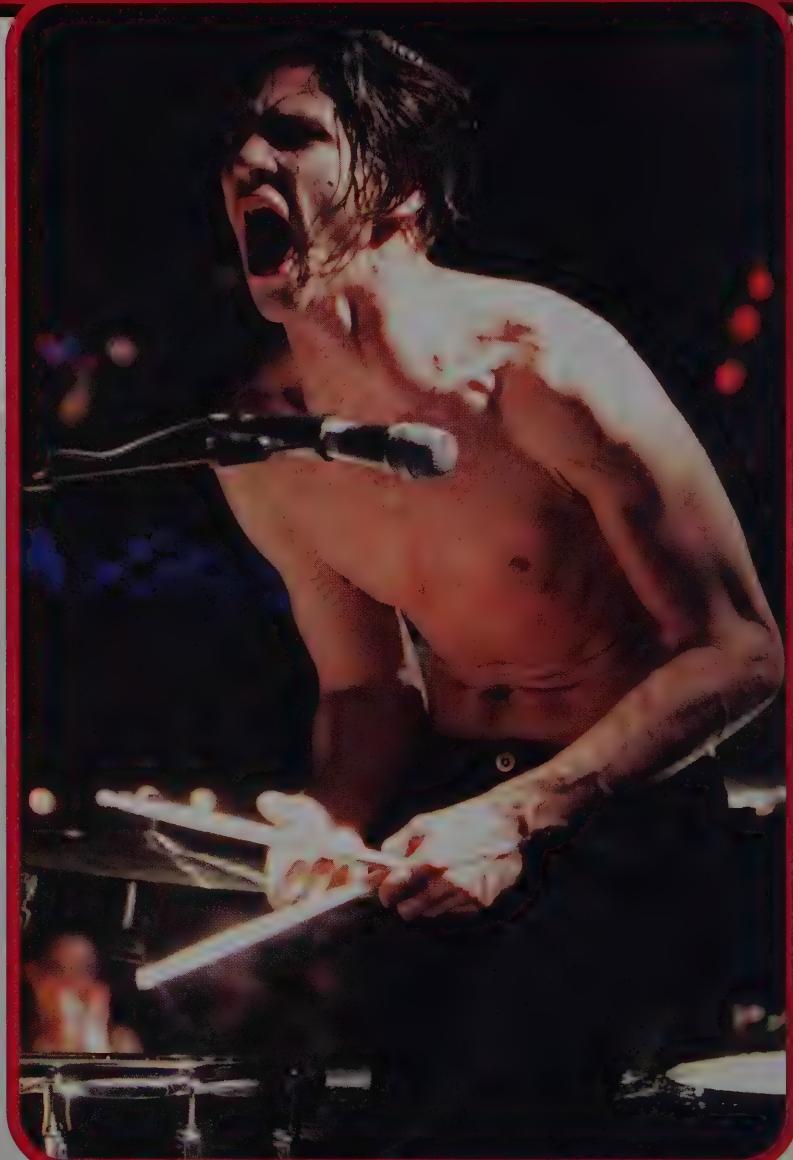
"I can't lie. Maiden rules. I love 'em and don't care what anyone says. I was totally obsessed with Eddie when I was 8 years old and asked my mom to buy this shirt with the *Killers* cover on it. She chirped back, 'NO! That's disgusting!' and I think that this album made the list just to spite her, in some juvenile way. Whatever. My babysitter played this album for me when I was wee and twisted my mind forever. Thank you, Mark."

### \*Sleepytime Gorilla's Museum Of Natural History

"Every time I listen to this album, I hear something new that blows my mind. They're a brilliantly original and deft group that approaches something like Meshuggah, Fantomas, and SWANS performing the score to a maniacal Tim Burton film. If you're looking for a refreshing perspective on new heavy music, this band has it covered in every respect."

### EXTOL'S PETER ESPEVOLL

Sweden's Extol released *Blueprint*, an album that vocalist Peter Espenvoll says is "an innovative dive into the creative landscape of music, a true journey through thought, feeling and impulse." The vocalist gave us a quick rundown of his top metal albums, and why he loves them. He was nice and succinct, and to the point, a trait that many musicians are not known for!



### \*Believer's Sanity Obscure.

"Obscure music for obscure minds."

### \*At The Gates's Slaughter Of The Soul

"It goes without saying!"

### \*Cynic's Focus.

"It's unique metal performed by most brilliant musicians."

### \*Edge of Sanity's Crimson.

"A masterpiece combining great melodies, technical skills and great groove in one very long song."

### \*Living Sacrifice's Nonexistent

"It's my most brutal childhood memory."

## EVERY TIME I DIE'S KEITH BUCKLEY

Keith Buckley sings for Every Time I Die, a band who've released their new album, **Gutter Phenomenon**. The sarcastic singer described Every Time I Die as "good music for really bad people," with his tongue planted firmly in cheek. We asked the singer to answer this question in a short



period of time, without giving him much time to think. He only gave us 4 records, saying, "I always pick Journey, or Faith No More's **King For A Day...Fool For A Lifetime**, because most people don't like that record, but I gave it the chance and got more and more into it. I could say the great classics, but I am going to just tell you the records I am listening to right now." Fine with us.

### \*Clutch's Blast Tyrant.

"Everything about it is perfect."

### \*Metallica's Kill 'Em All.

"I don't even know why I picked this, probably nostalgic reasons. It was the only tape in my friend's car."

### \*Converge's Jane Doe

"It's still phenomenal."

### \*Def Leppard's Vault:

"The greatest hits. It has everything you need on one CD."

## CIRCLE TAKES THE SQUARE'S KATHY COPPOLA

Circle Takes The Square's Kathy Coppola says her band has serious passion for "playing shows, during which we submit ourselves to the challenge of communicating with unfamiliar faces using only the vocabulary that our music provides. Each show allows us to explore our own emotions and experiences from a new perspective as well, as translated into this unique language." That's deep stuff, but CTTS back it up with the music they create on stage and on record. Here's Coppola sounding off on her metal faves. She also claims she used to look like Dave Mustaine! No, we're not kidding. Miss Coppola didn't give us specific reasons why she loves the classics, but she did say, "Those are some records that blew me away when I first heard them, and they still hold up today. I was consumed by them, especially **Operation: Mindcrime**, and **Master Of**

**Puppets**. I analyzed the artwork and read every lyric. What a nerd I was!" Don't worry, Kathy. We're nerds, too!

**Metallica's Master Of Puppets**  
**Slayer's Seasons In The Abyss**  
**Anthrax's Persistence Of Time**  
**Guns N' Roses' Appetite For Destruction**  
**Queensryche's Operation: Mindcrime**

## BLEED THE SKY's KYLE MOORMAN

Bleed The Sky guitarist Kyle Moorman also submitted to our survey. He clearly thought about it, as well, saying, "All of these albums are what helped mold all of us into who we are today, both musically as well as lyrically. I think anyone who's into any kind of metal can agree on this list, but it's so hard to pinpoint an exact five. Next time ask for the top 100 best metal albums and you got a deal." Well, Kyle, if **Hit Parader** was 100 pages thicker, we'd have a deal, but we've got space limitation. Bleed The Sky are signed to Nuclear Blast and their mission is to inspire a new generation of kids. "Even if we only inspire a handful of kids, we've succeeded 100% in what we do," the guitarist says.

### \*Alice In Chains's Dirt

"You can tell that AIC put everything they had into this record, and there isn't a single bad song on there. The vocals and the guitars stand out as some of the best of the grunge era. The lyrics are definitely dark, but very personal."

### \*Meshuggah's Chiasmusphere

"Meshuggah is definitely a musician-oriented band, but this album, while being one of the most technically difficult albums I've heard, is also one of the most brutal I've ever heard."

### \*Pantera's Far Beyond Driven

"The mix of blues influenced guitar and thrash metal makes for a brutal collection of songs from *Broken* to *Slaughtered*, and it inspires almost anyone who hears it to pick up a guitar."

### \*Sepultura's Roots

"The mix of guitars and tribal drums make for a brutal album. It definitely goes where no other metal album has gone before. It was a change from the earlier Sepultura, but I think this album is what set them apart from other bands of their time."

### \*Cryptopsy's None So Vile

"The drums make this album a definite Top 5."



I sometimes appears as though life is in a perpetual state of flux for Black Sabbath. Just when this timeless heavy metal unit begins to crank it up into high gear—as they did on last summer's *Ozzfest*—it becomes time to shut it down once again. Just when they begin to believe that they may have a new lease on recording life—potentially making their first "original lineup" album in 25 years—they learn that vocalist Ozzy Osbourne seems more intent on taking a step back (or at least sideways) in his music career (despite the success of his recent *Under Cover* disc). And just as they begin to think that their various solo projects—including guitarist Tony Iommi's *Fusion* (made with bassist/vocalist Glenn Hughes) and bassist Geezer Butler's latest GZR release, *Ohmwork*—will lead them further away from the hallowed Sabbath threshold, current rumors indicate the exact opposite may well prove to be true.

"It can sometimes be a little confusing," Iommi said with a sardonic smile. "But I'll gladly accept any chance provided me to get together with the members of Black Sabbath and play music. At this point, obviously, I would love to see us begin focusing a little more intently on a new album, but even that subject has become more prioritized than I once thought it might be. At the moment I'm rather content with where Sabbath stands... but as I've learned over the years, that could change at a moment's notice."

After a summer of discontent—or at least mild discomfort—for Sabbath (during which they were forced to cancel a number of *Ozzfest* shows due to Ozzy's hay fever-induced vocal problems) it was widely believed that the band would follow one of two possible career courses: break apart for the foreseeable future, or immediately get to work on writing and recording a new studio disc. Little did anyone expect that a *third* option would emerge—that the band planned to undertake an arena tour of Canada and Europe. But while it may have been unexpected, Iommi was certainly pleased to be presented with yet another opportunity to play the music he has created, lived with and loved for more than 35 years.

"I think you'll see all future Sabbath shows played indoors," the mustachioed guitarist said. "Apparently Ozzy has allergic reactions to many things that tend to be in the air during the summer, and that impacts on his voice in a very bad way. That became a major problem during the summer outdoor *Ozzfest* shows. Doctors were telling him that he shouldn't perform back-to-back dates. So when we had to cancel quite a few shows, it was thought that we might continue on in the fall... but indoors where there would obviously be less chance of a hay fever attack."

Ozzy's aversion to the outdoor rock and roll lifestyle has generated one other major consequence—it has forced him to announce that he will never again headline *Ozzfest*, the star-making metal showcase that he and his wife/manger Sharon helped create

# Black Sabbath An Yesterday's Twist

BY P.J. MERKLE

a decade ago. While the Ozz insists that this decision neither spells the end of *Ozzfest* (where the summer-long tour will continue on in future years with a variety of non-Ozz related headliners leading the way) nor signals the demise of his recording/touring career, it does indicate a major change for one of the most famous and lucrative music festivals in rock history.

"It's the right time for me to make this decision," Ozzy said. "After ten years, the *Ozzfest*'s name and reputation have been estab-

lished. Sharon and I will just find other bands who can headline the event each year and take it to even greater glory. I think it's time for me to move on and do other things."

So what, exactly, might those "things" include? Perhaps a new studio album with Sabbath? Perhaps Ozzy's first solo disc in more than five years? Perhaps the completion of the theatrical production that he's been rumored to have been working on for much of the last decade? Perhaps even a new TV show now that MTV's *The Osbournes* has run its course? When it comes to Ozzy... who really knows? Sometimes it seems that even this 55 year old legend isn't exactly sure what each hour of each passing day will bring his way.

One who can certainly share that perspective is his life-long associate Iommi, who has seen both the good side and the bad side of the "Ozz-factor" throughout their on-again, off-again, three-decades-plus partnership. He always wishes the best for his often unpre-

dictable friend, but even Iommi wonders where all these changes may eventually lead. "It does make me wonder," he said. "I certainly hope that Ozzy's health remains good and that his outlook stays positive. I truly enjoy being around him much more now than every before. One of the big problems in the past is that he often would get into fits of depression. Thankfully, now that he's cleaner and healthier than he's been in years, he's turned his attention towards the future. I do hope that future includes a lot of work with Sabbath."

It's no secret that in early 2006 the Black Sabbath musical camp stands somewhat divided in two—with Ozzy and Sharon on one side, Iommi, Butler, and to a lesser extent, drummer Bill Ward on the other. But, as the guitarist was quick to mention, there's probably greater harmony within Sabbath at the moment than there's been in close to 30 years. Everyone involved now seems to recognize the importance of keeping this legendary heavy metal force alive and well, as well as making sure that the Sabbath legacy is not "tarnished" by any future endeavors.

"If we get the opportunity to make a new album, the pressure on us would be clear," Iommi said. "We'd have to create something truly special. It's a rather intimidating notion. I'm reminded of the old axiom, 'Be careful what you wish for...' I know how long and how hard I've tried to make a new Sabbath album a reality, but if it does come to pass—which I certainly still hope it does—I know the real work will only then be beginning. But I feel confident that we can come up with something magnificent... an album that will add something important to Sabbath's musical history."



OZZY **HP**

# "We had never recorded in the United States before."

**I**t sounds like an old Abbott & Costello comedy routine; HIM. Who's HIM? Ville Valo is HIM. He's HIM? Who's HIM? He's HIM. Ville Valo is HIM!

The fact of the matter, however, is that while hard rock fans on this side of the Atlantic may still be trying to figure out exactly who Ville Valo is and how he is involved with the Finnish goth-metal band HIM, the rest of the music universe seems to have already figured out that eternal question rather well. On this unit's five previous albums, they've risen to the pinnacle of Euro-rock royalty, headlining major festivals and selling out arena tours across the face of the Continent. Now, with the release of their latest disc, **Dark Light**, HIM — which in addition to vocalist Valo consists of guitarist Linde, bassist Mige, drummer Gas and keyboardist Burton — has set its sights squarely on conquering the rest of the known universe.

"We actually recorded this album in the States — something we had never done before," Valo said. "Perhaps that gives a little indication of our intent. It's not so much that we're determined to become stars in America, it's more that we're determined to broaden our horizons."

That's certainly true with the music on this album, as well. It's good to sometimes put your fingers in the power sockets and see what happens; that's what you've got to do mentally with songs as well. You've got to try and reach certain new areas within yourself, if possible."

On **Dark Light** this highly ambitious unit has pulled out all the stops in their attempt to both expand their sound and broaden their international appeal. On tracks like *Under The Rose*, *Rip Out the Wings of a Butterfly* and the sinister *In the Night Side of Eden*, Valo and his rock and roll stormtroopers have melded instantly infectious melodies with powerful lyrical imagery and a touch of pure metal madness to create one of the year's most diverse and powerful collections. And while the style presented by HIM is radically different than just about anything else currently on the American music market, Valo feels confident that the inherent brilliance of his band's latest work will reach receptive ears on this side of the Big Pond.

"In many ways this album represents a new start for us," he said. "It's the start of a new record label contract and the start of a new tour which will allow us to visit new countries and hit a lot of new bars. The nature of the songs themselves defies easy classification, and hopefully easy dismissal from those who only want to listen to what they are told is the sound of the moment. In contrast, our sound is timeless."

While it remains to be seen how State-side fans will react to **Dark Light**, it is clear that this Finnish unit is well prepared for just about anything that may now come their way. In fact, HIM's distinctive brand of "love metal" has already made them the most successful hard rock band of all time back in their native land, and one of the best-selling Euro-rock groups of the last decade. While such notions may be a little too obscure for the American music masses, upon listening to HIM's latest disc, you begin to get a solid feel for what this highly stylized, riff-meets-romance quintet is all about. Throughout **Dark Light**, HIM blend haunting melodic

passages, jarring lyrical outbursts and wall-shaking guitar fury. They then utilize this unconventional combination of ingredients to propel their musical creations along their various unpredictable paths. To say the least, it's different. And when it works as planned (which is more often than not), it's as inspiring as anything you've heard in recent years.

"Love Metal is what we do," Valo said. "It's different from anything else you may be hearing because it isn't afraid to include elements of metal, pop, goth and glam. All those sounds and styles work together. It's music inspired by the feelings you have before the first touch, before the first kiss. In my mind, Love Metal is like the movie poster for *Gone With The Wind*, except you have Lemmy from Motorhead embracing Madonna in the sunset."

With that striking visual image firmly implanted in our mind's eye, let's see if we can unravel some of the mysteries that still surround this Scandinavian hard rock unit. While Valo seems intent on keeping some of HIM's origins cloaked in a shroud of mystery, it appears that this unit got its start back in 1995. A year later their first release, the EP **666 Ways to Love**, emerged, creating an instant commotion throughout Finland.

In '97 HIM followed up that initial success with the release of their debut full-length album, **Greatest Love Songs, Vol. 666**.

Spurred by their Euro-hit cover of Chris Isaak's *Wicked Game*, the band took to the road, where their heavy-yet-moody sound began

to win them followers outside of their Nordic stronghold.

It wasn't, however, until the release of their next disc, 2000's **Razorblade Romance**, that things really began to take shape for HIM. Media in England and the European mainland began to recognize the group's unusual approach to music, and major touring artists began to request that HIM serve as their opening act. By 2001 HIM were on

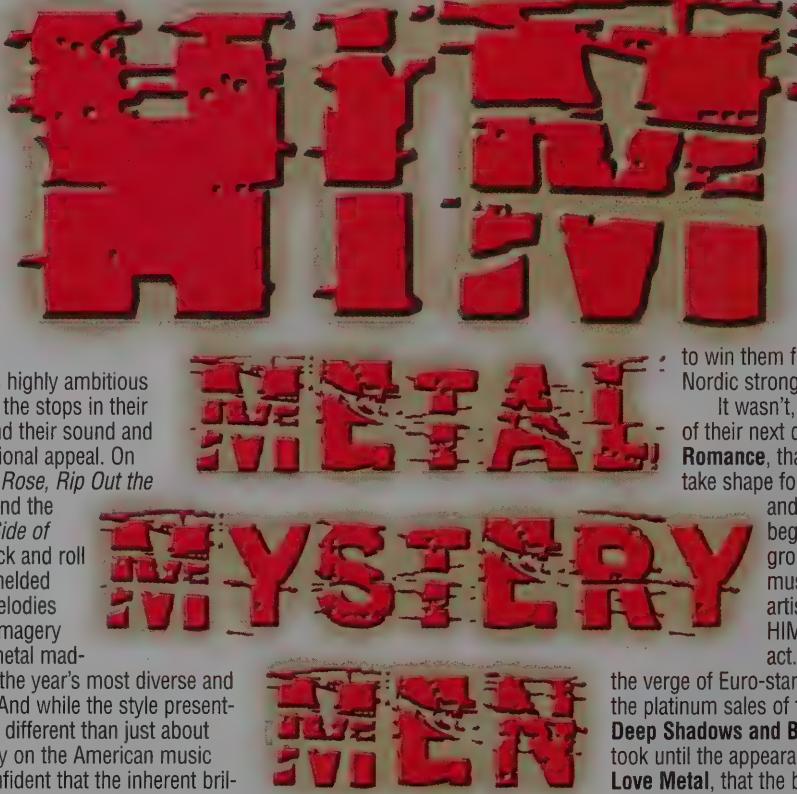
the verge of Euro-stardom, a fact supported by the platinum sales of their next disc, 2002's **Deep Shadows and Brilliant Highlights**. But it took until the appearance of their 2003 effort, **Love Metal**, that the band began to attract some attention on this side of the Atlantic. But rather than kicking things off in the States with that effort, a label decision was made to release

**Razorblade Romance** as America's introduction to HIM. It's a call with which Valo had little problem.

"We love all of our albums, so to have had **Razorblade Romance** come out in America at that time was fine with me," he said. "It did open some doors for us, and attract additional record label attention, which is exactly what we wanted."

So are American fans clearly more attuned to the rap/metal musings of Linkin Park or the musical chaos of Slipknot ready for a band as, shall we say "eclectic" as HIM? Perhaps only time will tell. But there seems to be little question that if **Dark Light** provides a solid foothold into the lucrative State-side rock scene, HIM are bound and determined to make the most of that opportunity.

"We think the time is right for our kind of music to make an impact in America," Valo said. "We've toured with Evanescence, and we saw the kind of reaction they got. That's what we want as well."



BY DAVID VOLKER



VILLE VALO **HP**

# SYSTEM OF A DOWN SECOND ACT

BY  
ERIC NASH

**S**ystem of a Down are one of the very few hard rock bands that have *never* known failure. They may have experienced the rare setback and encountered the occasional nay-sayer, but for the most part it's been an amazingly smooth and successful run to the top of the rock pile for this Armenian/American quartet. Ever since their self-titled debut disc emerged back in 1996, this Los Angeles-based experimental unit has scored hit after hit, selling more than 12 million albums in the process. With the immediate success of their latest album pairing, *Mezmerize* and *Hypnotize*, Serj Tankian (vocals), Daron Malakian (guitar), Shavo Odadjian (bass), and John Dolmayan (drums) have once again proven that they stand head-and-shoulders above all who may lay claim to their title as the most eclectic, esoteric hard rock band in the world. But for a unit that apparently holds all the "answers", System is a group still surrounded by "questions." Why release two albums in such a short period of time? Has success dulled this band's razor-sharp political edge? Has their music found new creative pastures as System has continued to grow? We found the answer to all these questions, and more, during our recent conversation with Malakian.

**Hit Parader:** Does it ever strike you as strange that the more non-commercial you try to be, the more albums you sell?

**Daron Malakian:** I don't know if I look at what we do in that context. I think we've earned everything that's come to us. I have no problem saying that my soul has bled for these songs—that I've put myself through everything imaginable in order to best convey the thoughts and concepts that I want. So whatever success we've had has been earned.

**HP:** Did you ever worry that the radical approach the band takes both musically and lyrically could limit your success?

There may have been times back when we were performing in clubs when such a thought may have briefly crossed my mind. But it wasn't something that we ever really considered, let alone worried about. We never set out to sell millions of records. We never were the kind of band that listened to the radio and tried to copy what was popular. Even when we were opening shows we never tried to learn any "tricks" from the headliner. We were always most concerned with just being the best band we could be. It seems like it's worked fairly well for us.

**HP:** After a decade of writing, recording and touring, do you find it hard to maintain the creative edge that has always made System so special?

**DM:** The tough part for me is limiting what I want to say. That's why we have two albums this time—there is so much that motivates me. It can be something funny I see on the street, or it can be something that's happening in the world. I never know exactly what will motivate me.

**HP:** How closely do you follow world events on a day-to-day basis?

**DM:** Sometimes when you're on the road, that can be difficult—especially if you're overseas. But with internet communication, and the ability of having cable news at your fingertip virtually wherever you are, it's easy to stay in touch. In fact, it's grown hard to avoid being confronted by the news almost all the time. I can remember a time in the late '90s that when you went on the road you were somewhat sequestered away. People had to call you up when you got to a show or arrived at a hotel in order to find you and tell you certain things. Now they can e-mail you, or call you on your cell phone... you're *never* out of touch.

**HP:** System is such a critical favorite... are you ever amused by some of the interpretations the

media has made over your music and lyrics?

**DM:** Not really. I try to leave the lyrics somewhat open to interpretation. If every song was strictly about my life, my experiences and my beliefs, I think things would run the risk of getting very boring. One of our strengths as a band is that even when we're writing about a very specific subject, like Armenian genocide, people can relate it to other conflicts and world situations if they want.

**HP:** People have always focused on the "serious" side of System. Yet on these albums it seems as if you're attempting to lighten things up.

**DM:** People hear what they want to hear in our music, and that's fine with me. That's the way it should be. But we've always had a lot of humor in our songs. For whatever reason, people have usually tended to gravitate more towards our political material. But if the humor of these songs is being noticed, then I'm very happy. That's such a big element of what we do that I sometimes get very frustrated when it's ignored. A lot of fans expect a certain sound and a certain lyrical perspective from us, and when they're asked to listen and respond to something else it sometimes isn't that easy for them. Thankfully, they've shown a willingness to do that with these albums.

**HP:** What motivated your writing on *Mezmerize* and *Hypnotize*?

**DM:** Everything

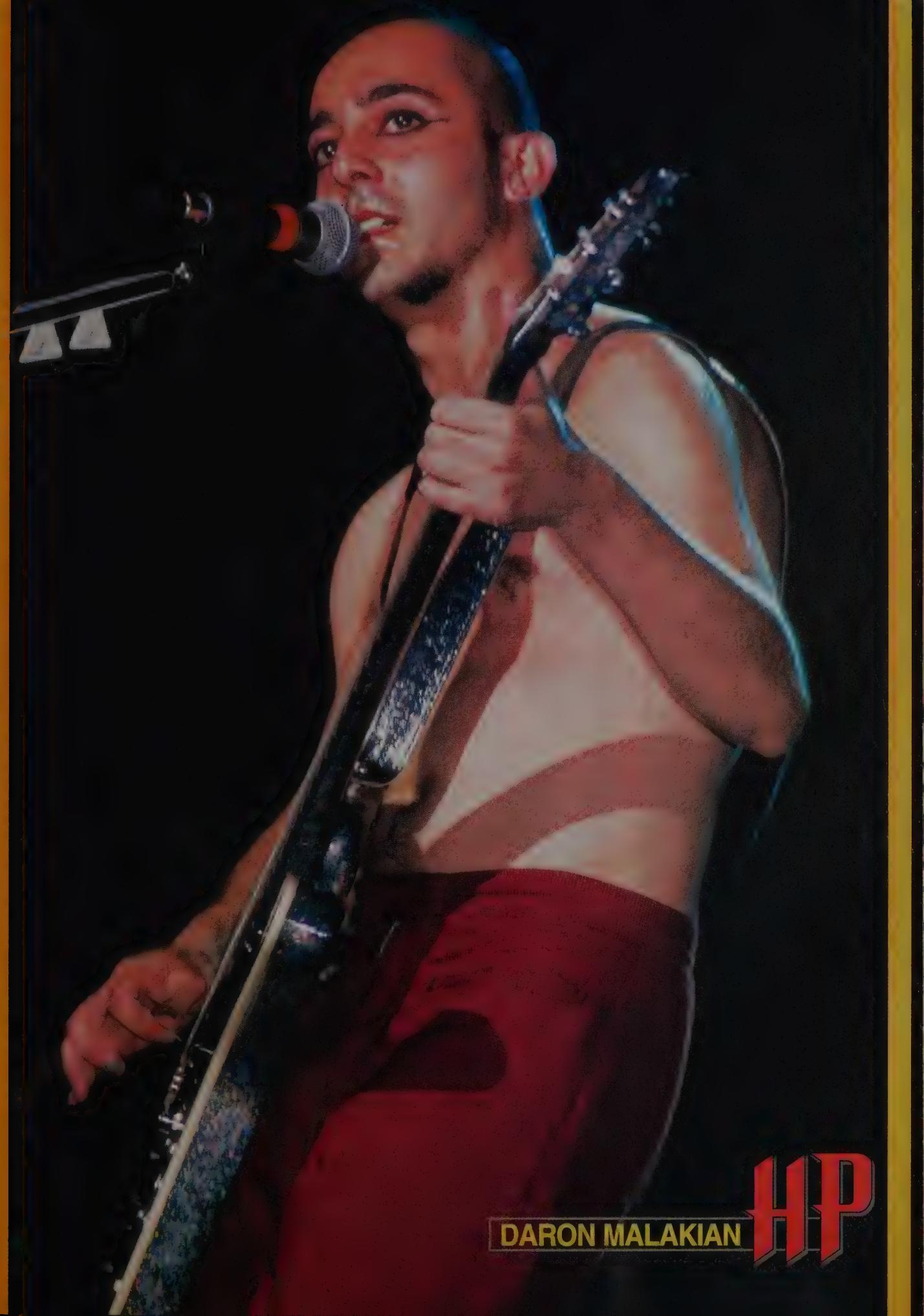
motivated it. Over the last few years the world has changed around us, so we've changed as people. And if we have changed then the music we're making has changed as well. We didn't want to lose our identity on these albums, but we didn't want them to sound like anything we've ever done before. If you try to change too much,

you can lose everything you've created. It's so important that we stick to our roots because we're very proud of them. But on the other hand, I don't want to get stuck on those roots. I want to always keep adding things and changing things to what we do. I want our past success to serve as a foundation for what we're doing now.

**HP:** Do you ever feel any extra pressure due to the incredible success the band has enjoyed?

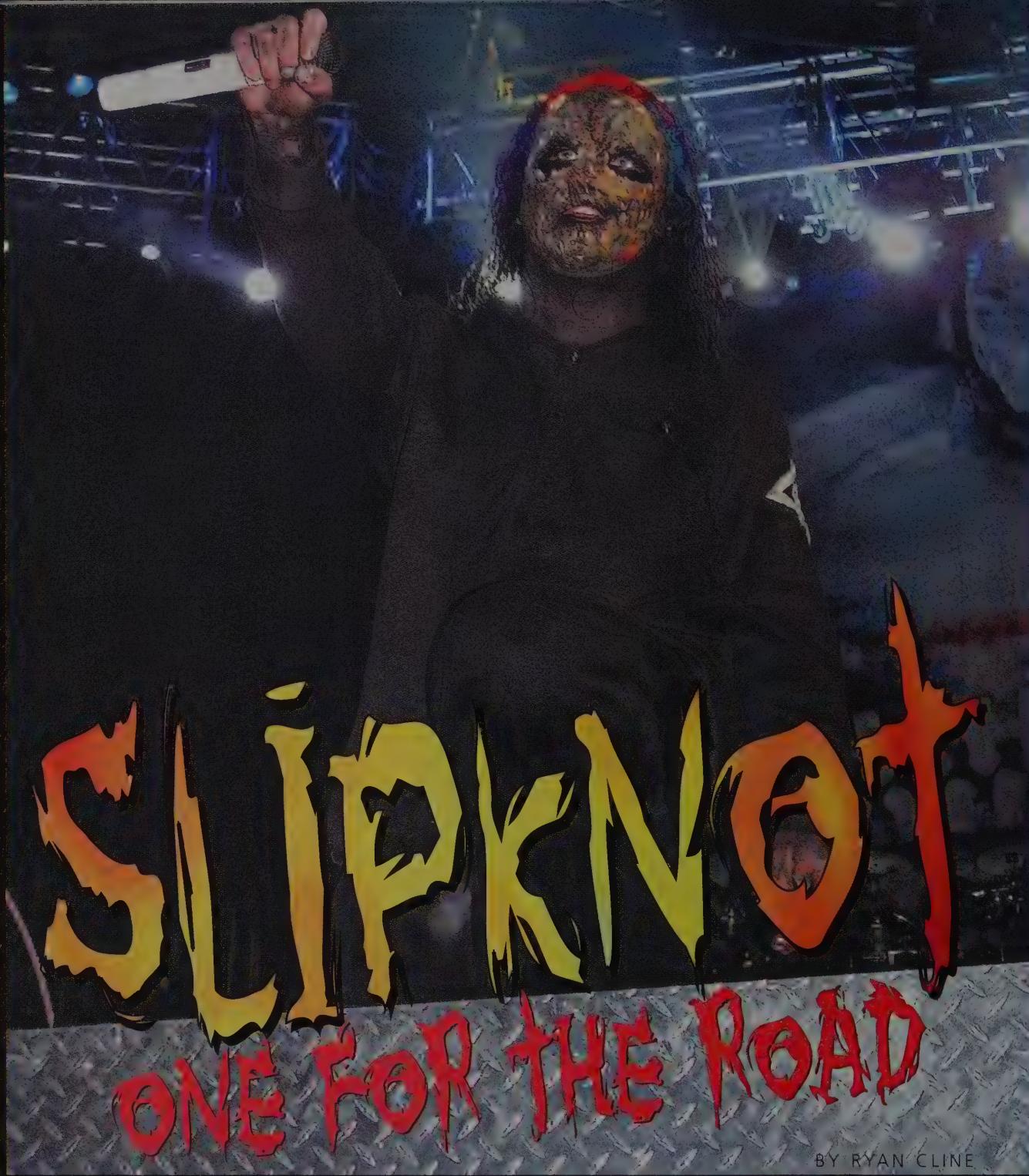
**DM:** I do feel the pressure. It's not really brought on by any success we've had, it's brought on more by my desire to make sure this band continually produces the best possible music. What that pressure does is make sure that I work as hard as I possibly can. Success is something I try not to think about too much. It doesn't impact me at all. This is not a band of "rock stars" and we never will be.

**"I like to think that we've earned everything that's come to us."**



DARON MALAKIAN

HP



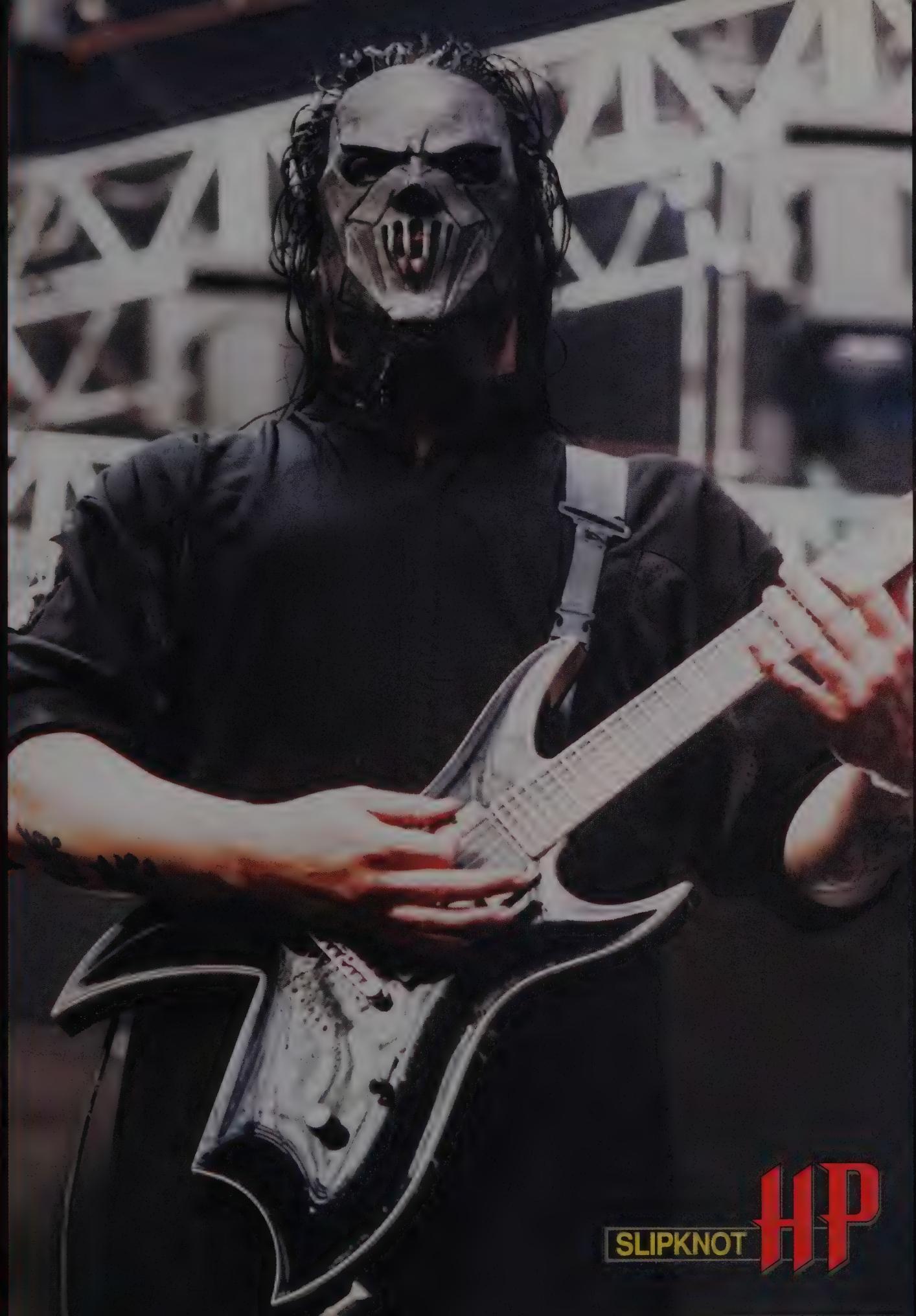
BY RYAN CLINE

**T**he member of Slipknot—d.j. Sid Wilson, bassist Paul Gray, guitarist James Root, drummer Joey Jordison, keyboardist Craig Jones, percussionist Chris Fehn, percussionist Shawn Crahan, guitarist Mick Thomson and vocalist Corey Taylor—thought long and hard about what to call their new live disc. All sorts of slightly sordid, somewhat satirical and scathingly scatological options passed through the minds and mouths of 0,1,2,3,4,5,6,7 and 8 before they collectively decided on the most logical course-of-action. *9.0: Live* is what they came up with, and in its direct simplicity lies its inherent brilliance. Nine rockers, acting as one, creating the ultimate in-concert album experience for their ever-growing legion of fans.

"I believe that we do what we do better than anyone else," Crahan said. "In this band you have nine great musicians, each of whom is willing to sacrifice his individual spotlight when required in order to benefit the band's collective whole. We're a living, breathing, pulsating human machine. We are able to

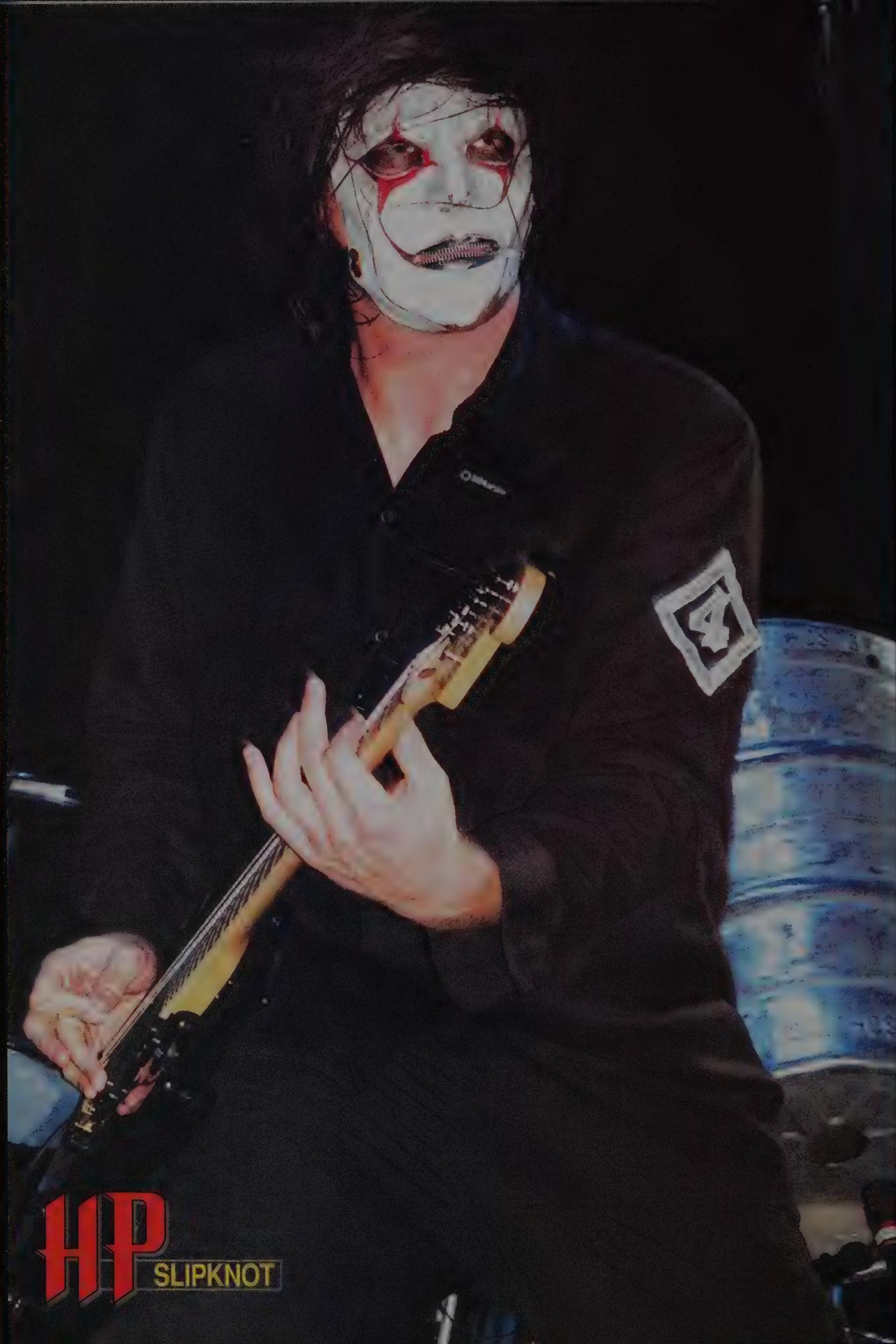
take our individual talents, our skills as musicians, as artists and as performers and merge the individual pieces into a single unit. Especially when we're on stage, we're a single nine-headed monster, and that's one of the things that really comes across on *9.0: Live*."

Recorded over the two-year span that followed the release of the Knot's groundbreaking disc, *Vol. 3: The Subliminal Verses*, their new two-disc live set captures all of the intensity and insanity that marked the nine man mutant metal army's lengthy march of world conquest. To the Orient they stormed... across South America they roared... through Europe they roamed... and across the face of North America they tore. No place on Planet Earth was safe from the Slipknot invasion! During that time this already-legendary unit performed in front of over two million fans (including the headlining stints at *Ozzfest* and *Jägermeister*), further establishing their hard-earned reputation as one of the most important and influential bands of their era. And while some misguided cynics may continue to scoff at the Knot's outlandishly shocking



SLIPKNOT

HP



**HP**  
SLIPKNOT

metallic tactics, these mask-wearing, coveralls-wearing rockers have thankfully learned to take it all very much in stride.

"At this point in our career, one thing we do have in abundance is confidence," Jordison said. "I don't think there's anything that can be said or written about us that hasn't been done before. It's all cool. We can handle it. We've kind of been the guys with the targets painted on our backs from the first day we started. I guess we asked for it with the way we dressed and the music we made. But after this album and tour, I think we're almost impervious. It's taken us almost a decade, but right now we feel like we're bullet-proof."

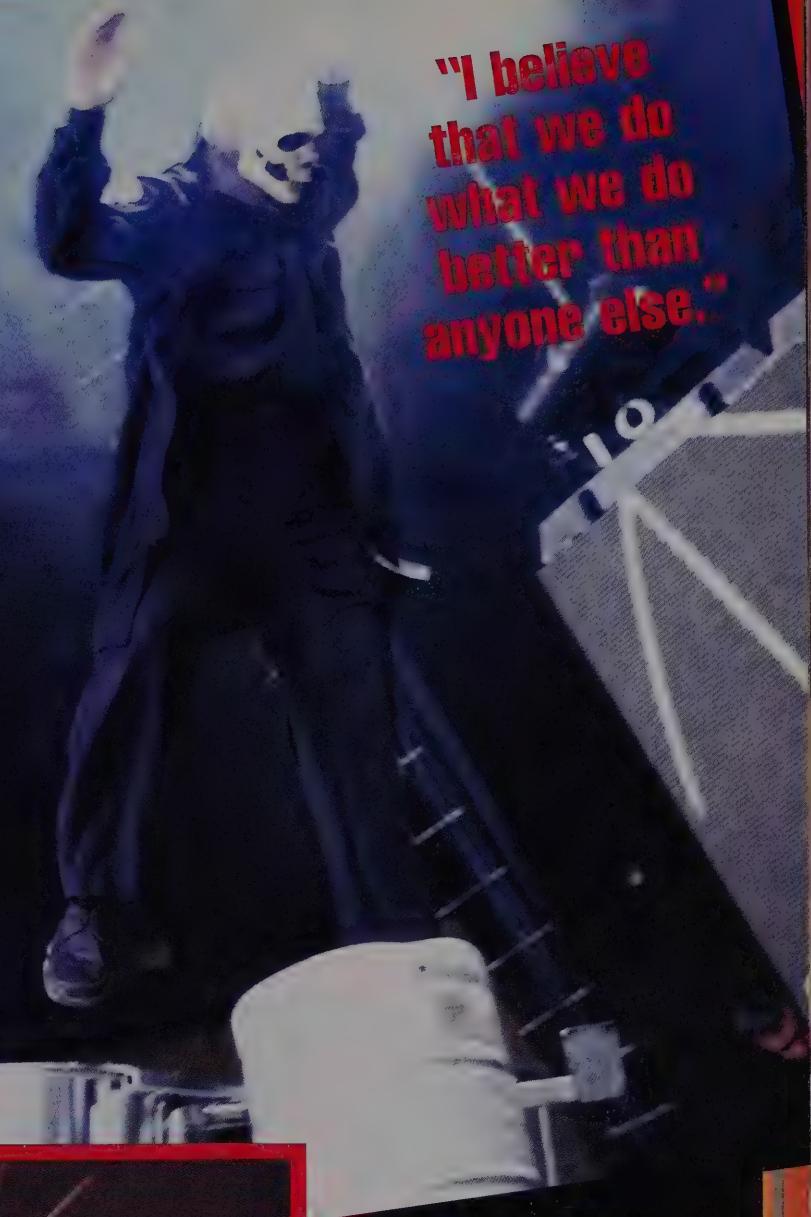
Targets or not, there's no denying the degree of impact that Slipknot continues to inflict upon the entire hard rock scene. You may love them, or you may hate them, but there's no way of ignoring the looming presence of the Knot over the 21st Century metal domain. At a time when so many other bands have been turning introspective and insular, the Knot continue to turn everything inside out. Taking the kind of theatrical panache first created by the likes of Alice Cooper and Kiss, these Des Moines natives have steadfastly maintained their take-no-prisoners policy of carrying *everything* they do to the next extreme. The results, especially on such songs as *The Blister Exists*, *Heretic Anthem*, *Pulse of the Maggots* and *Wail and Bleed* (all of which appear on **9.0: Live**) prove that Slipknot are more than the latest shock rock sensation; indeed, they're a band for the ages.

"Maybe the thing that I'm most proud of is the intensity that we bring on stage every night," Crahan said. "There isn't a performance I can recall when I haven't been totally overwhelmed by the power of the nine of us performing together. But when you combine that degree of intensity, with the heat generated under those masks and the sheer danger of our average show, it's amazing that we all survive from night-to-night. When we're on stage and the chords are struck, and the beats are hit, we all just look at one another and it just feels like dying. There hasn't been one show where I've walked on stage and I haven't told myself that I might just not make it out of here tonight. This could be my last day in this reality. But if that's the way I'm supposed to go on stage with these guys—then that's fine with me."

"I remember one show we play in Europe last year, my drums went forward, and I went head first right down into the concrete floor. My neck bent kind of sideways, and for a second I thought it was all over. I was just lying there on the floor for about two minutes waiting for some kind of sharp pain to start racing through my system. But slowly I started to realize that I had survived again, so I took another few seconds to just appreciate

how totally great my life is, and how I never knew I was gonna end up on the cement floor that night, knocking the crap out of myself because of how

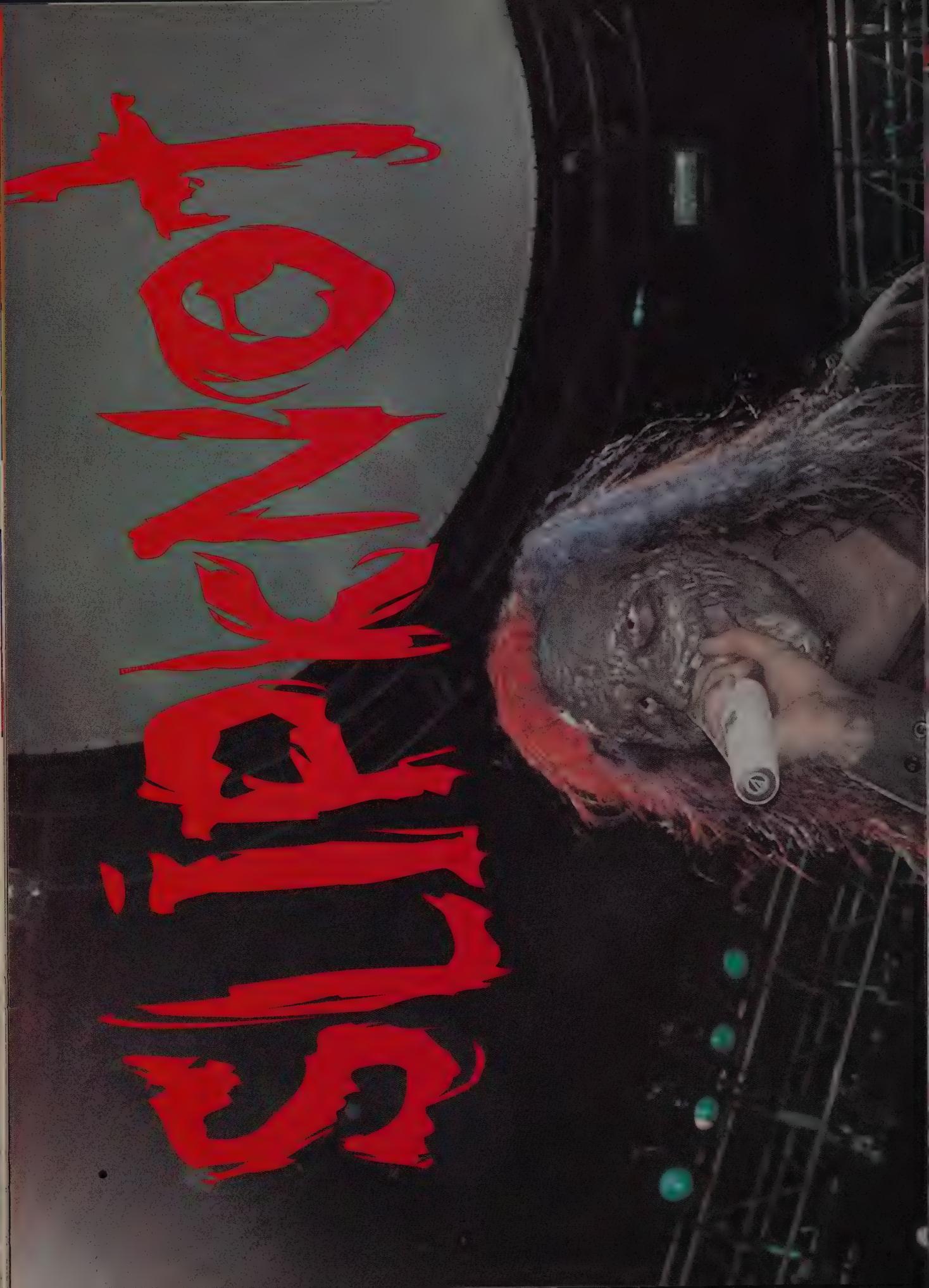
"I believe that we do what we do better than anyone else."



much we are all giving."

Despite Clown's words, and despite the incredible level of intensity that they bring to each one of their performances, it does seem rather unlikely that such on-stage actions will ever lead directly to the demise of a Slipknot member. At least let's all hope that's true! But the fact of the matter is that *no* band in recent rock memory brings more blood, sweat and tears to every show they give than this inimitable rock and roll machine. And while an aural document such as **9.0 Live** can't hope to capture the visual craziness that characterizes a Knot set, it still manages to achieve a degree of musical grandeur that should serve to silence anyone still bold enough to question Slipknot's true artistic merit.

"We realize that a lot of the people who are going to buy **9.0: Live** are the die-hard fans who are going to be painting visual pictures of us live in their heads as they listen to the music," Crahan said. "They may be used to seeing us live. Maybe they've come to a number of shows on the recent tours. But just hearing the music is an entirely different experience. It creates a psychosis—which is exactly what we're trying to create with our music."





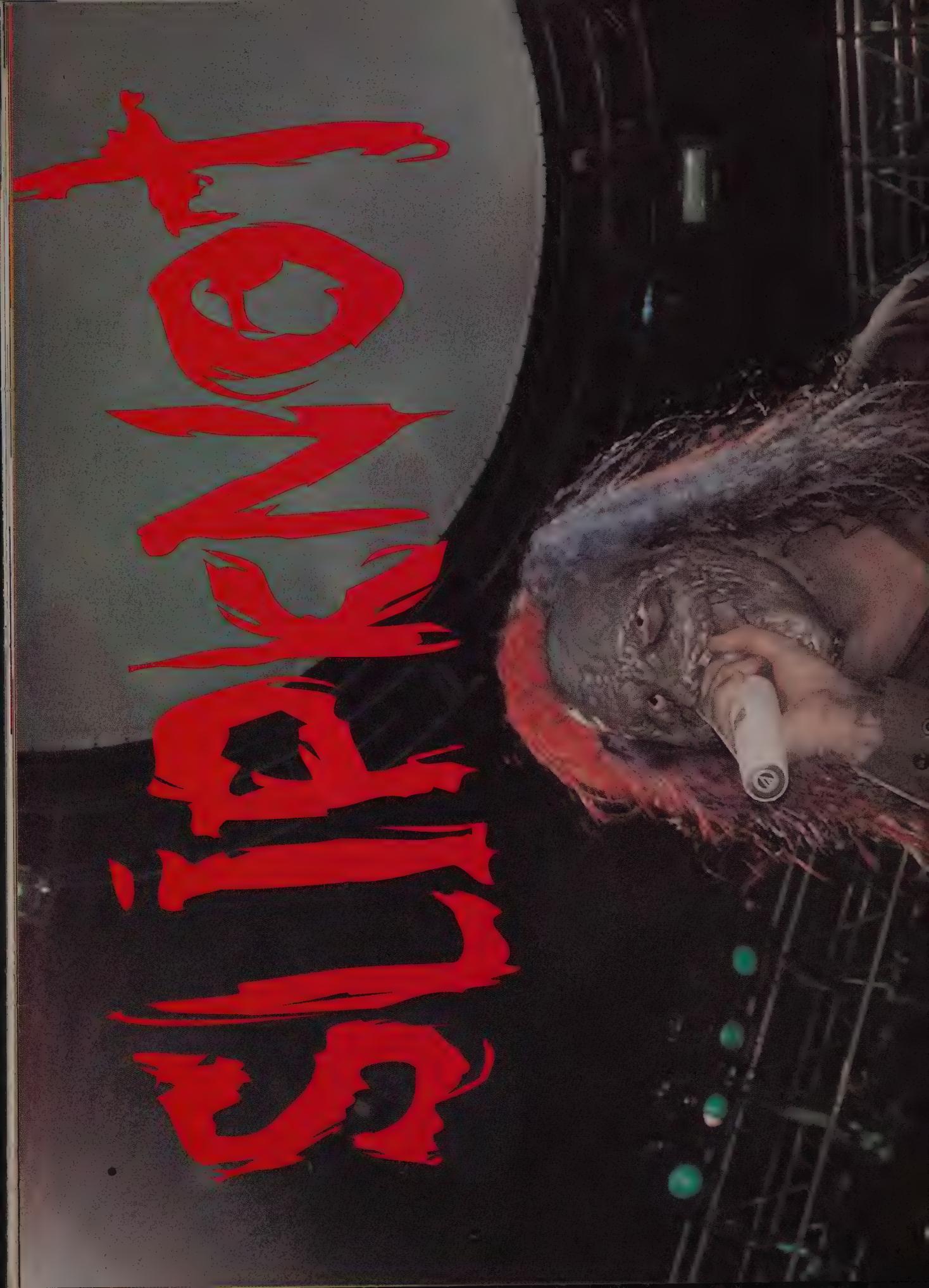
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**SP**



**HP**

CHINO MORENO

# DEFTONES

## POURING IT ON

BY ROB ANDREWS

**D**espite appearing at times during 2005 to be more focused on their "outside" projects, the members of the Deftones have obviously been keeping themselves very attuned to making sure that their primary artistic outlet remains in first-class working order. While vocalist Chino Moreno continues to promote his Team Sleep project, and his bandmates—guitarist Stephen Carpenter, drummer Abe Cunningham, d.j. Frank Delgado and bassist Chi Cheng—busy themselves with laying down the creative groundwork for the next Tone musical missive (now due in the spring), this ground-breaking hard rock unit has recently found time to put together an exciting—and highly revealing—new release under the all-encompassing title **B-Sides & Rarities**.

This two-disc CD/DVD extravaganza stands as a startling collection comprised exclusively of hard-to-find "import" singles, never-before-heard cover tunes, a smattering of re-mixed band favorites, along with a heapin' helpin' of Deftones-style eye candy. Contained on the 14-track CD set of **B-Sides** are a mind-numbing array of tracks that reveal much about the unique musical psyche of the Deftones. With songs ranging from Lynyrd Skynyrd's *Simple Man* to Duran Duran's *The Chauffeur* to Helmet's *Sinatra*, with covers of The Cure, Sade and the Cocteau Twins thrown in for good measure, this bold bit of sonic diversity proves once-and-for-all that the Tones rank as one of the most insightful and diverse bands of their rock and roll era.

position as one of the most important and influential bands of their era. It's a notion that the often introspective Moreno still has a little trouble fully grasping.

"It's hard not to hear people talking about you and your music," he said. "But I try not to listen. I guess we responded to all that talk by doing our best to ignore it. We're not here to please the critics. Our goal from the very beginning of the writing process for an album is to try and excite ourselves with the music we're making. We never want to get too comfortable with what we've become as a band. We don't want to read the press clipping saying how great we supposedly are. We won't allow making music to become easy for us. A lot of bands probably go with their initial instinct. We don't necessarily do that. We think about it, change things up, then make our move."

According to Moreno, while it is still relatively early in the band's latest round of writing and recording, this time around that "move" will invariably involve further defining and refining the razor sharp lyrical and musical forays that have become the Deftones' stock-in-trade. With the arrival of their new album still months away, the band continues to focus on writing songs bristling with an almost unbridled passion, as well as with a healthy dose of subtlety and imagination. As their fame continues to grow, there can now be no way of denying the 'Tones their rightful position at the very pinnacle of the contemporary music pecking order.

Their unabashed creativity carries over to the role this band has played in the sales charts—where the unabashed heaviness of their music serves to effectively counteract the saccharine sweetness and bland melodrama that characterize so many of today's top-selling acts. Indeed, the Tones have continually managed to create some of the most thought provoking, lyrically haunting and power-packed discs of recent rock history—something they certainly hope to continue doing in the years ahead. This is one band seemingly determined to kick their rock and roll machine into a higher gear, in the process creating music that seems to invade the brain and set up a permanent camp along your cerebral cortex.

"Hopefully by now, people expect us to try new things and approach our music in an unconventional manner," Moreno said. "That's exactly what we plan to do on the next album. Our goal is to make it very diverse and cover a lot of different angles. But our goal is also to present some things that people may not expect."

### "Every one of these songs has inspired us in one way or another."

"Those are all bands that we love and who have influenced us," Moreno said. "Every one of those songs inspired us in some way or another, and they played an important role in shaping who we are as a band."

The DVD side of **B-Sides & Rarities** is no less revelatory. Not only are all the band's historic music videos included—including those for *Bored*, *My Own Summer*, *Digital Bath*, *Back to School*, *Minerva* and *Bloody Cape*—but also two previously unseen live videos for *Engine Number 9* and *Root*. And if all that wasn't enough to inspire every Tone-head into action, all these clips are surrounded by exclusive footage drawn from the band's private video stock—providing fans with an incredible inside glimpse into the ever-unpredictable world of the Deftones.

"We wanted to make this the kind of DVD that showed fans that we were personally involved," Moreno said. "We didn't want them to think somebody at the record label just sat down and put our videos together, and then slapped a 'greatest hits' disc together. This is much more interesting because for the most part it features a lot of stuff that people haven't seen or heard before."

The immediate success of their **B-Sides & Rarities** set has once again propelled the Deftones squarely into the public eye—not that they're ever that far from the focal point of fans' attention. And as the band begins to put together ideas for their next disc (now scheduled for a Summer '06 release) it seems as if this highly eclectic unit is once again nearing the peak of their creative powers. But, despite all of their success, it's not as if things have ever come particularly easily for this admittedly unusual quintet. Indeed, for the Deftones every day seems to present a unique set of problems... and a unique set of subsequent solutions.

That's just the way it is when you're a member of one of hard rock's most lauded, applauded and analyzed units, a band that has continually redefined contemporary metal ideals thanks to albums such as 1995's *Adrenaline*, 1997's *Around the Fur* and 2000's *White Pony* and 2003's *Deftones*. And now with the acclaim heaped upon **B-Sides**, and the upcoming release of a new album, it seems as if this Sacramento-based unit has further cemented their

BY LEE TILLINGHAST

# KORN

## FOUR FOR ALL

**J**onathan Davis has never been one to sit around worrying about Korn's hard rock legacy. The dark haired vocalist has always been one far more focused on the here-and-now, concerning himself with the myriad intricacies involved in the creation of new music rather than thinking about how future generations may view the band he shares with guitarist Munky, bassist Fieldy and drummer David Silveria. But even Davis admits that after nearly a dozen years in the ever-unpredictable music biz, his thoughts have begun to consider the kind of history his unit is creating. Especially now, in the wake of the incredible world-wide response offered Korn's latest release, **See You On The Other Side**, Davis states that he has begun to expand his rock and roll vision and consider how this disc compares not only to some of his own band's historic recordings, but also how it stacks up to some of the classic albums of hard rock history.

"Hopefully that shows that kind of confidence I have in this album rather than some sort of misguided arrogance," he said. "For years I never really wanted to compare our albums, and I never really wanted to think of them in terms of some kind of historic significance. But I'm so proud of what we've done recently in terms of our music and our business sense, that maybe I should start reconsidering that attitude."

Davis and his bandmates certainly have much to be proud of. Their work on **See You On The Other Side** casts this hal-lowed heavy music unit squarely back into the contemporary music spotlight—a spot that they came precariously close to losing following the relatively disappointing performance of their last two albums, 2001's **Untouchables** and 2003's **Take a Look In The Mirror**. But now, with a streamlined lineup (minus long-time guitarist Brian "Head" Welch), and a revitalized outlook, this Bakersfield, CA-spawned unit seems primed and pumped to once again take on the rock and roll world. Thanks to such break-out tracks as *Twisted Transistor*, Korn has proven that they're a band that can evolve with the times—while staying one giant step ahead of the competition.

"I think we played it a little too safe on the last couple of albums," Davis said. "We didn't push ourselves to experiment enough. That's something we knew we wanted to do—we *had* to do—this time. So we brought in different producers like Atticus Ross and the Matrix, who have traditionally had more of a pop background, and started writing with them. These are the results. They took us in a different direction, while we allowed them to make the heavy rock album they've always wanted to do."

The musical marriage between Korn and their non-traditional producers has resulted in songs that spark the imagination both through their inventive rhythmic structures and their rather unexpected lyrical

forays. Such tunes as *Souvenir of Sadness* and *Politix* ring true to the Korn mold through their diverting chord changes and catchy choruses. But it is still Davis' insightful, introspective, often morose lyrics that continue to place the boldest Korn stamp on the musical proceedings.

"My lyrics are there, but they're different this time because I was writing with other people," Davis said. "The Matrix allowed us to do things in a totally different way. Instead of each going off and writing songs, we'd all get together and jam. They'd record it, go play with what we

had done, and then come back to us with sections of the jam that they had put together into a basic song structure. I've done my own thing in terms of writing on all the previous Korn albums. But this time I wanted to push things a bit, to try new ideas and work with new people. I wanted to approach the same lyrical topics in some cases, but I wanted to do it in a very different way. So having these people around me, with their different perspectives and different talents, really helped me achieve those goals."

Despite the flood of positive reviews that have recently come Korn's way, the fact is that some long-time fans have expressed concern that on **See You On The Other Side** the band has wandered a little too far from their guitar-based musical roots. Perhaps, some speculate, this is due to the absence of Head, who when teamed with Munky, helped power many of the band's classic albums to the top of the charts. While Davis acknowledges that their new album isn't "old school" Korn, he quickly dismisses the notion that Head's absence had anything to do with the band's new musical direction. In fact, he insists that the guitarist's departure has only served to further focus and refine Korn's studio approach.

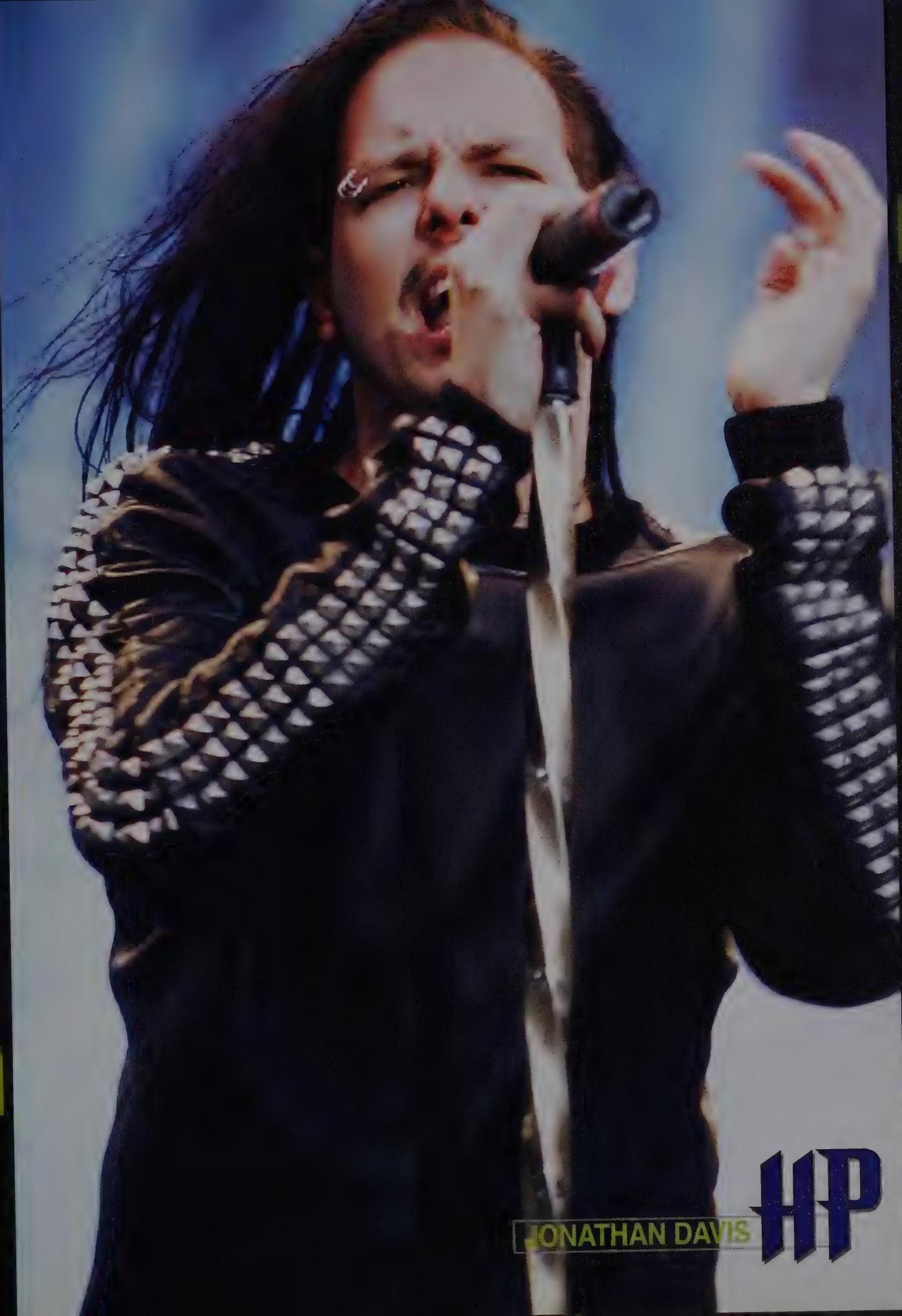
"I love Head like a brother, and I miss him," he said. "But he really wasn't into what we were doing on the last two albums. His mind was somewhere else a lot of the time. I wish him all the luck in the world with his new life, but I don't think this band has suffered at all because of his absence. We've drawn closer than we've been in a long time, and I think you can

hear that in a lot of these songs. Nothing against Head, but this is the strongest this band has been in years."

Davis admits that he and his bandmates remain uncertain as to when they may attempt to replace Head... or if they'll ever even do it at all! For the time being they've chosen to utilize former Otep guitarist Rob Patterson as their off-stage tour guitarist, though the band seems in no particular rush to once again make themselves a quintet. Indeed, Davis insists that after putting a dozen years of shared musical passions into Korn's rock and roll ascension, this ever-proud gang of four is apparently quite content to keep their musical club a very exclusive affair.

"We could never just invite someone in and say, 'Hey, you're the new member of Korn,'" Davis said. "Unless you've shared everything that's happened to us—the good and the bad—then you really can't be part of this band. I don't know, maybe something will happen and we'll add a new member at some point. But it won't be now, that I can guarantee. We're very happy with it just being the four of us, and we appreciate Rob's contributions on tour. We're not a band that's about to use tapes or samples to make up for someone's absence, so it was vital that we rounded out the sound on stage. But that doesn't mean that he is a member of Korn. This remains a very private club."

I think we played it a little too safe on the last couple of albums



JONATHAN DAVIS

HP

**A**venged Sevenfold knew that their new album, *City Of Evil*, would cause them to gain a lot of new fans. They also knew it would cause them to shed some of their longtime followers, since they changed their sound a bit. Gone are the hellbent screams of front-man M. Shadows; they've been fully replaced by adenoidal, clean singing. It's a definite difference, but A7X are confident and proud of their new album, as well they should be. They used to be called "The Iron Maiden of the hardcore scene", but now, they're flashier, and are like "The Guns N' Roses of the hardcore scene", even though they hate being pinned to any scene! The musicianship on *City Of Evil* is still stellar, and while some fans may resist change, A7X fully realized that without change, there is no progress, and they want to keep growing and progressing, and are positive they will pick up tons of new fans along the way. We at Hit Parader agree. Shadows, who spoke to Hit Parader via the phone, defended his album steadfastly.

# AVENGED SEVENFOLD

## CITY SLICKERS

BY AMY SCIARRETTO

### How are you guys dealing with the fan reaction to this new record?

A lot of our fans don't like that we've stopped screaming on the record. We don't listen to that kind of music, so we don't want to make that kind of record. We don't want to be a part of any scene. We make fans. We lose fans. We are willing to accept it and have some people that don't like our music.

### Did you like screaming before, because you *did* scream a lot on your previous records, *Sounding The Seventh Trumpet* and *Waking The Fallen*?

We started six years ago, and metalcore was not even in existence then. I want to credit our band as a group who helped start that scene. When we were 16 years old, it was cool. We went back to our roots and wrote a record that is more in touch with those roots. We wanted to write a record we were confident with. We didn't want one single scream on the new record, because we don't like doing it.

### Did throat surgery have anything to do with not wanting to scream on *City Of Evil*?

That surgery was 18 months ago. I did 3 tours after that surgery, and sang our old songs. Kids think that I don't scream anymore because of the surgery, but I had surgery a while ago. I don't scream on records anymore because I don't want to!

### Were you worried that you might lose your voice altogether when you had surgery? That has to be scary for any vocalist, screamer or not!

I went to the best vocal surgeon in the world. He has worked with Aerosmith's Steven Tyler and The Rolling Stones. I knew it would be fine. He works with Julie Andrews, too. It was a minor surgery, and it was such a non-issue.

### So, A7X decided a long time ago to change up their sound...to separate itself from copycats and soundalikes, right?

We knew it was going to happen. But if no one ever copied us, we would have stopped screaming anyway.

### A7X are like Guns N' Roses for the newer metal breed of metal fans. Do you agree or disagree with that statement?

With the new record, I don't think anyone sounds like us. I don't think there is a scene that exists for what we do. If it works, it works. If it doesn't, it doesn't. We want to stand on our own. I don't think any band wants to be labeled 'the next anything.' Hopefully, people will someday say come up and coming band is going to be the next Avenged Sevenfold!

A7X came out of the metalcore/hardcore/Orange County scene, however unintentionally, but you guys always seemed to want to distance yourselves from it from the beginning!

Even though people think we're abandoning the metalcore scene or taking ourselves out at this moment, the reality is that no metal core kids came to our shows. There were more Hot Topic fans that came to our shows. The metalcore scene never liked us. But now people say we're leaving that scene? We were never accepted by it.

The skull bat is a prevalent symbol of A7X. Like Ed Hunter of Iron Maiden!

We call it the Death Bat, and that's what kids call it, too.

I've been in NYC with my A7X hoodie, which only has the bat, and not the band name, and people come up to me and say, "Avenged Sevenfold rules!" The symbol really is recognizable!

That's so cool! A friend of ours drew it, and it caught on, so we put it on all our merch. It was selling way more than anything else without it.

Give our readers the skinny about *City Of Evil*.

The first track, *The Beast And The Harlot*, is about the fall of Babylon, and that is what the city in the album title is based on. We wanted to make it more modern day, like Las Vegas or Los Angeles burning. It's the same concept as the old city of Babylon... how things are the same now as they were then, just more modern. Big cities breed decadence.

You have always used The Bible as lyrical inspiration, despite being a non-religious band!

Totally. We wanted to keep that vibe. We wanted to include the biblical destruction story. It's got a mocking, mimicking swagger to it.

The meat and potatoes of the A7X sound is intact; it's just got a more nasally singing style to it. What's your final thought on this situation? My favorite records... I couldn't stand them at first. It just takes time. We made it known before we even recorded this album that it was going to be different! Yet some of our fans are surprised that it is different.

They thought different meant the same! But we let them know ahead of time. I see a lot of kids coming around to the record, and our record sales have been great so far. I've also seen a lot of kids that hated us before are now into us. It's been a transition, and we have to stick together as a band, because we have old fans that loved us that now hate us and new fans that once hated us that now love us. Right now, we're like in a tidal wave. It's a storm, but it'll get better. It's all about rock and roll. It's a good time.

**"A lot of fans don't like that we've stopped screaming on our records."**



AVENGED SEVENFOLD

HP

The logo for the band Aerosmith, featuring the word "Aerosmith" in a stylized, jagged font. The letter "A" has a star on its top right. The logo is set against a background of large, black, feathered wings extending from the sides.

# Aerosmith LIVE & LOVIN' IT

BY RANDY SMITH

**T**he concept of a "live album", a "hits album", or better yet, a "live hits album" certainly isn't anything new to Aerosmith. Indeed, throughout this legendary band's three decade-plus career they have been the subject of no less than a dozen such collections, including 1978's *Live Bootleg*, 1980's *Greatest Hits*, 1986's *Classics Live*, 1987's *Classics Live II*, 1988's *Gems*, 1991's *Pandora's Box*, 1994's *Big Ones*, 1994's *Box of Fire*, 1998's *A Little South of Sanity*, 2001's *Young Lust*, 2002's *O, Yeah!*, and now their latest live/hits offering, *Rockin' the Joint* (Live at the Hard Rock Hotel Las Vegas.).

Some cynics may state that even for a band as great as Aerosmith—arguably the most significant and influential American hard rock band in history—such a number of compilation collections represents a bit of sonic overkill. But the fact is that each and every one of these releases has served some sort of well-defined purpose within the band's collective rock and roll imagination. Some wrapped up an existing recording contract, while others neatly summarized the highlights of this Boston-based unit's hallowed career. With all that in mind, however, the appearance of the dual disc *Rockin' the Joint* (which features 11 Aero all-time classics on one side, and four dynamic performances filmed at the same 2002 Vegas gig on the other) still represents something quite special to vocalist Steven Tyler, guitarist Joe Perry, bassist Tom Hamilton, guitarist Brad Whitford and drummer Joey Kramer.

"That was a special show for us because it was probably one of the smallest crowds we played before in years," Tyler said. "The club at the Hard Rock only holds 3,000 people, and the night we were there it was packed to the limits. I don't think you could have squeezed one more person in the joint. So it was an incredibly hot crowd in an incredibly intimate setting for us. We sensed it would be special, which is why we chose to record the show and film it for DVD use. But, I've got to admit, things turned out even better than we may have hoped. This music just jumps out at you."

Featuring an array of songs drawn from throughout their career, *Rockin' the Joint*, offers something special for Aerosmith fans both old and new. Sure, all-too-familiar radio hits like *I Don't Want to Miss a Thing* and *Walk This Way* make their presence felt. But what should be of particular interest to true Aero connoisseurs is the appearance of rarely heard (and even more rarely recorded) band chestnuts like *Seasons of Wither* (from 1974's *Get Your Wings*) and *No More No More* (from 1975's *Toys in the Attic*). Throw in a cover of Fleetwood Mac's classic *Rattlesnake Shake*, and what you end up with is an Aerosmith live disc... with a difference.

"We went back to the beginning of our career for some of these songs," Perry said. "We had a lot of fun knocking the dust off of them but it was a little nerve wracking, too. We hadn't played some of these songs in a very long time, and in some ways we had to go back and refresh our mem-

ories. I think we've only played *No More No More* a total of 20 times in our entire career. We were going on muscle memory for some of these, which gave the performance a real edge."

"This is a different album for us because of the songs involved," Tyler added. "*Season of Wither* is one of my all-time favorite Aerosmith songs, but in the old days, when it first was recorded, we never played it live. I don't know why that was, but it just seemed to fall through the cracks. Over the years it's really become an Aerocult favorite, which was very satisfying to me. It always gets a major reaction on the rare occasion we drop it into the set list. It means a lot to me to finally give the fans a killer live version of this song."

Obviously the DVD side of *Rockin' the Joint* provides the Aero gang with the chance to explore new technology, as well as present some great rock and roll. Not only are there live "video" versions of *No More No More*, *Draw the Line*, *Dream On* and *Sweet Emotion*, the entire audio disc is featured in Enhanced PCM Stereo. While such technology was only a dream back when this band first kicked their rock and roll sound into high gear in

the early '70s, Aerosmith have adapted to the opportunities provided by state-of-the-art tech work as few other hard rock acts have.

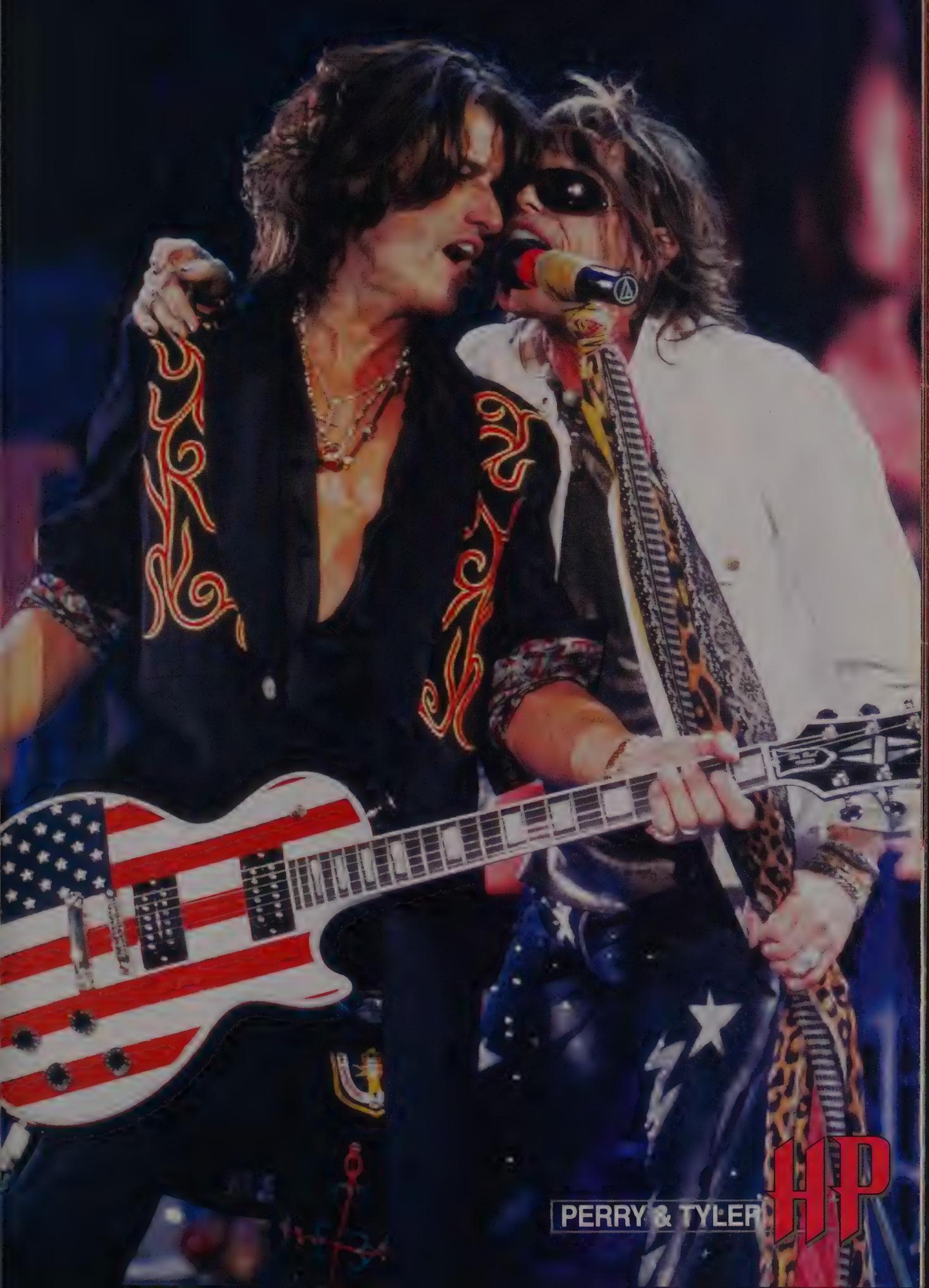
"We've never been a band to shy away from trying something new," Hamilton said. "We enjoy taking advantage of the latest that technology has to offer and see if we can somehow incorporate elements of it into what we do. We

don't force anything, but we don't shy away from it. In this case, being able to present the album in both traditional stereo, and Enhanced Stereo formats was very exciting for us, and with this being our first Dual Disc release, we feel like we're offering the fans a special value for their purchase. That's very important to us."

So what's next for Aerosmith? With their last studio release, the blues disc *Honkin' On Bobo* now nearly two years old, and the group enjoying a mostly restful 2005, it would certainly appear that it's time for this beloved band to get back to work. Indeed, according to Tyler, plans are already afoot for the Aero boys to begin work on their next album in April, with a new disc hopefully arriving by year's end. But as these time-tested veterans have long realized, you simply can't rush the creation of great rock and roll—the kind of stuff that may make it onto some future Aerosmith live or greatest hits collection.

"That's what you always aim to do," the singer said. "You aim to create a song that will live on long after you're gone. I think we've done that a few times already, but we're always prepared to do it again. We're writing some of the best songs of our lives at this point in our career. We're still as hungry and anxious to get going as we've ever been. The day that stops will be a sad day for all of us... but I know it's gonna be a long, long time before that happens. We're still lookin' ahead, and we're all very excited by what we see."

**"I don't think you could have squeezed one more person into the joint."**



PERRY & TYLER

HP

# THE EDGE

## HARD ROCK'S NEW STARS

BY: AMY SCIARRETTO

### EVERY TIME I DIE

There's a noticeable Southern rock guitar sound on Every Time I Die's 2003 breakthrough, **Hot Damn!** That sound is expanded heavily and heartily on the follow up, **Gutter Phenomenon**. "I think we wanted to make something a little more nostalgic," says guitarist Andrew Williams. "Bringing the old and the new is what we want to do, and the bands in our genre are afraid to take those chances. This is more fun for us, because we can lay back on a groove and feel the music. There is no human aspect to music now, and now we sit back and write rock 'n roll tunes, and put a Southern rock influence in it. It's got more feeling."

Some might be surprised to hear Williams make such a serious statement about his music, because the band is often misperceived as a bunch of party animals when they're really just having fun on tour. "We

something that will stand the test of time, and they think that their latest album will be just one of many heavy records that contributes to keeping rock 'n roll at the forefront of American culture. The phrase "Gutter Phenomenon" is what they said about rock and roll in the '60s, a gutter trend that would go away. But it never went away.

"Some bands out there have to talk about stuff to get attention. With us, it's all about the music, first. Music is first, and then seeing what kind of trouble you can get into," Williams says. "We're not into the perks of the job. We're not the guys making music 'real' again, but you have to remember why you play your instrument in the first place, and that's to make music. We remember that."

A cornerstone of ETID's music is the emotional, intense, screamy vocal delivery of Keith Buckley. This time out, Buckley took vocal lessons, and the vocals and music were recorded separately, and it's made all the difference.

"Our producer Machine would not let us preview the vocals. We just had songs, and did not hear vocals at all," says Williams. There was an element of surprise, even for the band members. "We were amped. The music was done, and we knew we had an awesome guitar record, and a musician's record. We had no idea how the vocals would sound over top. When we listened, we were frowning, because Keith stole it. He did an awesome job. Hats off to Keith. Things came out of him that he didn't know he had in him."

As for **Gutter Phenomenon**'s role in the ETID cannon, Williams says, "Out of all 4 CDs we put out, it's the most real representation of who and what we are. We wasted and spent so much time making it," Williams reveals. "This is the one record we took our time on. **Hot Damn!** was done in a month and a half. We took 5 months to make this record, so buy it!"



### EVERY TIME I DIE FAST FACTS:

- *Kill The Music* is Williams favorite song on the record, "because it's so raw and so diverse. It's got everything we're trying to accomplish in one song. Old Every Time I Die. New Every Time I Die. It's the best representation of us. If I was to play one song for someone who never heard us, that's what I'd play."
- Williams aspires to build a log cabin. "I tried to make a log cabin with my friend. He started making it while I was on tour, and then we haven't gotten together since I've been home. I have not started on it, but he has. I am definitely involved."

sit at home, sit on our computers, watch "Judge" shows, like **Judge Judy** and **Judge Joe Brown**, and we go fishing. Girls aren't present," laughs Williams, about the band's time off the road.

Despite their somewhat exaggerated party animal reputation, Williams and ETID view rock music as

## ED GEIN

Syracuse-based band Ed Gein borrow their name from a notorious serial killer. But why did they choose to call themselves Ed Gein, as opposed to other famous murderers like Jeffrey Dahmer or John Wayne Gacy? The reason is simple. The kids who comprise Ed Gein are horror movie fans, and Ed Gein's legend lives on and inspired their favorite horror movies, like *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre* and *Silence Of The Lambs*.

Bassist/vocalist Aaron Jenkins says, "Because Ed Gein and his house were so shocking, his story really stuck with people. Parents used it as a way to scare their kids into behaving. They'd say, 'Be good or Eddie Gein will get you!' People made up nursery rhymes based on him and everything. So, when some of those kids grew up and became writers and movie directors, they had Ed Gein in the back of their minds. We took his name because we dig horror movies and we were getting really sick of all the bands with names like 'Autumn Skies Angels Bleeding Tears From Burning Wings of Scarlet.' Lame. To us, our band name isn't important. We just like horror movies and playing music."

Good enough. Ed Gein's noisy, thrashy music is as violent as the serial killer they pay homage to. **We Are All Judas Goats** blisters with bloody, fast riffs and screamed/barked vocals. It's exhausting to listen to, and undoubtedly tiring to play. But it's cathartic, that's for sure.

Ed Gein can also be celebrated for their DIY work ethic. This is a band that will hit road and tour its ass off, winning over one fan at a time. **We Are All Judas Goats** was released by Black Market Activities, the label run by Guy Kozowyk, singer for grind band *The Red Chord*. The relationship is symbiotic, and since Kozowyk is in a band, he knows how to help a band,

"We come from a mindset of punk rock," Jenkins says. "We have an aversion to contracts and general music business crap. But at the same time, we just want to do what we love and see where it takes us. We aren't going to turn down working with a label because we have to sign a contract or whatever. But we did kind of give him a hard time about some of that stuff. We complained about a lot of crap, and refused to bend on some things, and Guy really went out of his way to make sure that things got worked out. He knows where we are coming from and he has a lot of the same values that we have. That's why we were so stoked to work with him. We want to grow as a band. We want to keep doing this as long as we can and take it as far as we can. But on our own terms."



### ED GEIN FAST FACTS

The band was robbed 7 times in just 2 years! "A few of them were pretty major. One of them was almost crippling. Guy has really helped us out a lot and helped keep us going," the singer says.

•The lyrics on **We Are All Judas Goats** are extremely personal. The band recently lost a good friend to cancer, and Jenkins' grandfather battled Alzheimer's Disease. "It's terrible watching friends and family wither away from diseases that could potentially be cured if our shitty president and his conservative buddies weren't standing in the way of science," offers the singer.

•Members of Ed Gein used to play in a band called Beyond Fall before forming Ed Gein.

# THE EDGE

HARD ROCK'S NEW STARS



## PRIMAL FEAR

Primal fear bassist Mat Sinner is a huge pro-wrestling fan.

"I've been watching this stuff for a long time," he reveals. "Sometimes I like the bantering that goes back-and-forth, more like what Ric Flair, The Rock, or Stone Cold do. And the interviews, of course. That's cool stuff! Overall, I think it's very professional entertainment and you can learn a lot about presentation from them."

Wrestling aside, Primal Fear take a lot of flack for being a power metal band. Power metal is the red headed stepchild of heavy metal, and a lot of fans make fun of power metal, calling it "loincloth rock." If Sinner was an attorney arguing for the merits of power metal as a credible genre, he'd say, "the world is big enough! I don't hear these criticisms in Japan, Korea, Brazil, Argentina, Mexico, South Africa, Canada and throughout Europe. There are enough countries and plenty of markets to tour in to sell lots of albums. I know there are plenty of metal fans in the U.S. who support us."

Primal Fear endure in the power metal genre because of their faithful fan base, and Sinner feels **Seven Seals** is Primal Fear's best album to date. "We have faithful and loyal fans everywhere in the world and the metal scene is a very good working community," Sinner explains. "For example, the open air festivals all over Europe in the summer time are where a lot of power metal bands perform." These festivals are fantastic events for fans and bands alike. "Power metal bands still have a lot

### PRIMAL FEAR FAST FACTS

- Sinner met Chris Jericho at the March Metal Meltdown festival when the wrestler played with Fozzy. "He was a very cool dude and he knows a lot about European metal! If you listen to their music, you can hear that metal and wrestling have a big connection. I would love to do entrance music for one of those big wrestling guys!"
- Sinner offers his opinion on why Europeans metal bands reference the book/movie, **Lord Of The Rings**, in their lyrics and band names. "Europeans like these types of monumental, epic stories, and LOTR has been the most outstanding one. Of course, this movie can inspire a musician to write music, to write epic music. Europe has a past with castles, knights, and famous battles and LOTR reflects this kind of life history. We see life a little different. Europe has a very long history, and so it's so much easier to get influenced and infected with a movie like LOTR."

of good ideas about song writing and for their performances," Sinner continues. "On the other side, the crowds at those festivals are very enthusiastic and they're all peaceful concerts! During the past couple of years, younger generation of metalheads have made their presence known at metal shows and they're buying albums."

When not making a glorious noise with Primal Fear, two of the band's members work for a record company. Another is a drum teacher. Two other members are electronic engineers. Three of the members are serious fans of Shalke 04, a German soccer club. Vocalist Ralf Scheepers is into weightlifting. Randy Black, the band's Canadian drummer, enjoys playing ice hockey. Guitarist Stefan Leibing rebuilt his new house. Guitarist Tom Neumann skates, and Sinner is a big fan of running. See, you can be a power metal musician and a functioning, normal member of society.

## HATE ETERNAL

Hate Eternal's Erik Rutan is a busy man. In addition to his writing, recording, and playing with his main band, he enjoys a career as an oft-employed death metal producer. "I would have to say it's 50-50 right now," Rutan reveals about how he splits his time. "My love and

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# THE EDGE

HARD ROCK'S NEW STARS



## HATE ETERNAL FAST FACTS

- Rutan was once in Morbid Angel, one of the most influential death metal bands of all time.
- Rutan has worked with Cannibal Corpse, Sóilent Green, Into The Moat, Paths Of Possession, and Torture Killer, the side project of Six Feet Under's Chris Barnes.
- The Black Dahlia Murder is Rutan's favorite newer metal band right now.

devotion towards Hate Eternal is endless and will never become a side project, as we have dedicated ourselves to making this a premier death metal band. But I love recording albums, engineering, mixing and producing. To watch the creation of something is phenomenal, and that bands come to me with their trust that I will bring to fruition their expressions of who they are and the music that they love. But nothing beats playing my guitar with Hate Eternal. That is something I will do till my hands fall off." Spoken like a man with serious passion and love for his work.

"I don't have much of another life besides my work. But I enjoy what I do so much that it never feels like work!" As for Hate Eternal's new album, **I Monarch**, Rutan says the band rehearsed for 8 months straight before recording, and did multiple pre-production recordings. "I have never been so prepared for any album in my career," Rutan says. The album was recorded during the hurricane season. Right as the band was about to lay down the bass tracks, the power went out for days!" They say that the best laid plans of mice and men can often go awry, and while the band did practice and prepare, they were defenseless against mother nature!

An interesting thing about Hate Eternal is that the members never make eye contact with one another while performing live. "We never

really need it," Rutan muses, "Because we have been playing together for so long and we can foresee the others movements in our head and I think that is why we've never stopped in the middle of a song for a mistake. Sometimes, we have to improvise, when we can't hear or whenever I break a string, which happens quite often, since I play very hard. When that happens, Randy and Derek continue to play the song as a two piece, and Randy takes over the voice, so we can continue and never stop."

As for Hate Eternal's contributions to the death metal scene, Rutan hopes to be remembered for trying to change the face of extreme music, as well as the perception of extreme music, "with dexterity and musicality." Other than the band's sonic legacy, he hopes to be remembered "as a band that defied the system and what was trendy, and was a band that was not afraid to push the limits and have no boundaries." Those are lofty goals, but there's a lot about **I. Monarch**, that will keep Hate Eternal firmly entrenched in the hearts, minds, and memories of extreme metal fans.

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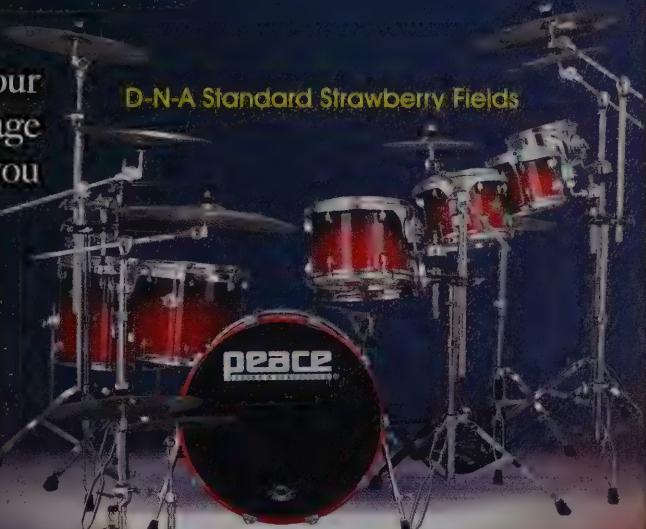
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BY RICHARD HIRSCH

In all honesty, when Shinedown's debut disc, *Leave A Whisper*, was released back in 2003, few outside of the band's inner circle of friends, family and supporters expected truly big things to happen for this diverse, hard rocking unit.

But despite the apparent odds stacked against them, this classic-rock tinged, Jacksonville-based unit not only managed to succeed, but to actually emerge as one of the year's true break-out rock and roll stories. Thanks to such hits as *Fly From the Inside* and *No More Love*, as well as two non-stop years of road work (where they often shared stages with the likes of Van Halen), vocalist Brent Smith, guitarist Jasin Todd, bassist Brad Stewart, and drummer Barry Kerch managed to effectively place their distinctive musical stamp on the contemporary music world.

But as is so often true in the here today, gone later today world of rock and roll, everything that Shinedown has so-far accomplished during their initial run through the music world means relatively little as the group unleashes their sophomore effort, *Us And Them*. Nobody knows that fact more than this ever-wary crew. They know they've got to prove their musical worth all over again to an ever-skeptical rock and roll audience. To do so, this time

*Inside*, which not only presents many of the top tracks from the band's initial run through the rock scene, but also a bevy of behind-the-scenes peeks at the Shinedown gang.

"We recorded the DVD in South Carolina at the end of our last tour," Smith said. "By then we had everything down *tight*! But it's gonna be great to be able to get on stage and play a bunch of new stuff. That's why we're so excited about this album. It's still Shinedown, but it's taken to a whole 'nother level. It shows everything we are, as well as everything we've gone through to get here. We're so proud of what we've accomplished so far because we've done it our way. We've had people tell us that we need to update things and change the way we look and sound. Well, you know what? The entire world doesn't necessarily share the ideals of L.A. or New York or London, and I think we've proved that. There are still a lot of places that like something they can relate to on a more basic, visceral level."

**"Being able to play every night, we became a stronger and more confident band."**

around the band has gone in an even more powerful-yet-accessible direction, honing their songwriting craftsmanship to a razor-edged sharpness and taking their playing to a new level of wall-shaking competence. That's what spending a veritable "lifetime" on the road can do to a band.

"It sometimes did feel like we were one the road for a lifetime," Smith said with a smile. "When we initially went on tour after the first album came out we didn't know how long we'd stay out there. It could have been a few weeks, or a few months. Nobody expected it to be a few years. But things continued to build for us, so we all knew that we had to take advantage of it—it was an amazing opportunity. And because of that, being able to play every night, we became a stronger more confident band, and you can hear that throughout *Us And Them*."

Shinedown's "stick-with-it" attitude has helped these wild-eyed Southern boys stay on the straight-and-narrow during a time when their brand of hard rock has been scorned by many throughout the music industry. Undaunted by the notion that their long-haired style and guitar-driven sound might be deemed "passe" or "dated" by the more eclectic members of rock society, this quartet has boldly forged ahead, believing that their rich blend of hard rockin' reactants and thought-provoking lyrics will draw the required response from everyone who hears it. Indeed, this philosophy not only pervades every track on *Us And Them*, but is also in evidence throughout their new DVD, *Live From The*





Formed in early 2001 by these four long-time friends, it didn't take long for Shinedown to begin making their mark on the rock scene. Right from the start there was no question where Shinedown's artistic bread was buttered—and that was around the charismatic talents of Smith. As this band stands on stage, all eyes are instantly riveted upon the lanky singer as his long, often multi-colored hair sways back and forth with each propulsive move he makes and every stomping step he takes. But there's much more to Shinedown than their dynamic stage show—one that was honed from countless shows performed along the notorious Florida club circuit. First and foremost, there are the songs—each one a mini-drama unto itself, a full-fledged slice of rock and roll brilliance where the band's varying influences and tastes all beautifully battle with one another for prominence.

"We don't like to do anything in a typical way," Smith said with a grin. "We pride ourselves in taking some things you might think you know, and then twisting them inside out. We're not trying to necessarily be different—it's just the way we are. When you grow up where we have, the way we have, you tend to do a lot of things in an out-of-the-ordinary kind of way. That keeps it interesting for us, and interesting

for the fans as well."

As proven throughout **Us And Them**, the members of Shinedown seem to have fully absorbed influences ranging from the classic sounds of home-town Jacksonville heroes, Lynyrd Skynyrd, to Led Zeppelin to today's chart-topping efforts of Staind, Korn and Tool. They've then filtered them all through their own unique musical perspectives. The resulting musical melange is a true feast for the senses, mixing bold, strident guitar power, blues tinged vocal fury and cutting-edge metallic mayhem into a swirling cauldron of bubbling rock reactants. With bristling choruses and hooks big enough to land a whale, this is heavy music that stands out like the proverbial sore thumb amid today's field of cookie-cutter heavy metal practitioners.

"We have so many different influences," Smith said. "We love 'classic' rock, but we love a lot of the things that are hot today. I guess you could say that we just love great music. We've never tried to limit ourselves in any way. Luckily for us, we never felt the need to be one of those bands that fit in to this scene or that one. We've always been happy just being ourselves. What we try to do is draw the best from all the great bands we love, and then put our own twist on things. This is the result."

# STONE SOUR

## COREY'S NEXT STEP

BY RAY MORRIS

**U**nless you've been living under that proverbial rock for the last couple of years, you're well aware that after a dizzying 18 month road run to the top, during which time they re-cemented their rep as one of the most exciting, entertaining and overwhelming bands in the metal world, Slipknot are on a well-deserved hiatus. For some of that band's members the time off means a chance to kick back and enjoy a brief respite before commencing with the next round of the Knot's metallic, shock-rock insanity. For others—most notably vocalist Corey Taylor and guitarist James Root—the break provides them with the perfect opportunity to re-launch their highly successful side-project, Stone Sour. You may recall how this unit's self-titled debut disc soared to the apex of the charts back in '02, spurred on by response afforded the band's break-out single, *Bother*. This time around Taylor and Root, along with bandmates Josh Rand (guitar), Shawn Economaki (bass) and Joel Ekman (drums), plan on taking things to the next logical level, a fact we recently discussed with the ever-informative Mr. Taylor.

**Hit Parader:** How does it feel to be part of Stone Sour again after such a successful two-year run with Slipknot?

**Corey Taylor:** It feels great. It's just refreshing to work with some different people on some different music. That's nothing against Slipknot, but it's nice to just have the chance to break away after two years and do something else for a change.

**HP:** Didn't you actually begin planning the second Stone Sour album while Slipknot was still on the road?

**CT:** Well, it was actually during breaks we had from the road—which weren't very often. The five of us would communicate, write, and do whatever was necessary, and by doing that we ended up with demos for about 30 songs. So when the Knot tour came to an end last September, I was able to move right over to Stone Sour without too much difficulty. We got Dave Fortman to step in as our producer, so we were pretty much ready to go by the end of the year.

**HP:** To refresh our memories, tell us about Stone Sour's background.

**CT:** I started the band with Joel in 1992, basically because we had nothing else to do with our time while living in Des Moines. We fooled around with various lineups until about 1995 when James joined and the lineup we have now became set. We wrote a lot of music, played a lot of shows, but we really weren't getting anywhere. So when Slipknot called, James and I decided to put Stone Sour on the back burner for a while. It took us seven years to come back to it, but it all turned out better than we could have hoped.

**HP:** What made you decide to reignite the spark of Stone Sour at that particular point in your career?

**CT:** It was a mix of things. I had the time because Slipknot was on a break, and I had the motivation. I had actually wanted to do

something with Stone Sour ever since Josh came up to me in 2000 and played me some of the songs he had been working on. As soon as I heard them, I knew I wanted to bring back Stone Sour. This group means a lot to me—it's the first band that ever really seriously cared about. It was a lot of fun making music with these guys when we first started, and it's still fun today. I wanted to try to recapture that same feeling of excitement and fun that we had a dozen years ago.

**HP:** How different is that approach to your attitude in Slipknot?

**CT:** It's like night and day. I'm not comparing bands because I love both of them. But

**"I started this band with Joel in 1992 because we had nothing else to do."**

because of the number of people in Slipknot, and the way we do things, we tend to be somewhat limited in our approach. The brutality we bring to the music places some natural limits on everything else. I wanted to try a few different things, and Stone Sour provided me with the perfect opportunity for that. I love making music that has more melody than the music that Slipknot is known for, and that's exactly what Stone Sour does. I like to call what we're doing 'melodic metal' that also has a lot of content and initiative.

**HP:** How difficult is it to play melodic metal at one moment, and switch back to Slipknot's brand of metallic brutality the next?

**CT:** I've shown that I can—it's up to me to make them work. In my mind they can go hand-in-hand, function as two sides of the same coin. To me they're both equal sides of my musical personality—the brutal side of Slipknot and the melodic metal side of

Stone Sour. It's not about how many albums each band sells or how many songs get on the radio. It's about the quality of the music, and both bands have plenty of that.

**HP:** This is your second album. What experiences did you learn on your debut that you put to work on this one?

**CT:** I learned that I can do both things—the intense metal of Slipknot, and the more melodic metal of Stone Sour—without sacrificing anything. They each make the other better... at least in my mind.

**HP:** How important is it for you to take a break from Slipknot at this time?

**CT:** From a musical sense, I think we're all as committed to the band as ever. We could go out tomorrow and put on a great show. But from the emotional and physical side of things, a break was good. By the time we end a tour we're all physical wrecks. We beat the crap out of ourselves

on stage every night. When you wake up each day, you've got to take a minute to see which body parts want to move, and which ones don't. After you do that non-stop for a number of years, you do need a bit of a break. We've gone non-stop for the last two years since the release of *Vol. 3: The Subliminal Verses*, and that does take its toll on you.

**HP:** How long does it take you to get used to performing without your mask on?

**CT:** I hope my face hasn't scared too many people (laughs.) Actually, it's a lot easier to perform with it off than with it on. Those masks can get kind of hot and bothersome at times. You don't think about 'em when you're up on stage, but when you're in the dressing room right before a show, and you're about to put on a sweaty, stink-filled mask, you do wonder what the hell you're doing. But, in all honesty, I know after a while I'll get that itch again, and I won't be able to wait to get my mask back on



CORY TAYLOR

HP

"I've been generally satisfied with the way people have responded to this album."

Trent Reznor won't easily admit the satisfaction he derived from Nine Inch Nail's latest disc, *With Teeth*, making a Number One chart debut last summer. Nor will the mysterious Mr. Reznor openly state his pleasure concerning the sold-out status of his band's latest world tour. But considering the daunting roadblocks that Reznor needed to overcome in order to attain his current level of success—including recently conquering of a variety of well-publicized personal demons—it would be difficult for NIN's musical master to be anything but thrilled by his latest artistic accomplishments. The fact remains, however, that revealing such up-beat emotions would seem to run against the nature of Reznor's decidedly dour rock and roll persona.

"I am satisfied by the way fans have responded to *With Teeth*, he said. "Considering that there were times over the last few years when I seriously wondered if I would even survive, the success of this album is very rewarding."

If truth be known, there were some within the music world who privately wondered if Reznor could ever regain the kind of creative spirit that catapulted such mid-'90s discs as *The Downward Spiral* to the pinnacle of rock success. Following the mixed response given to 2001's *The Fragile*, some within the music biz believed that Reznor's growing personal problems were beginning to take too heavy a toll on his musical output. And when the years started to pass between album releases, and rumors involving Reznor's lingering drug dependencies started to fill the rock wires, many jumped on the "NIN is

over" bandwagon. But when a clean, lean, and mean Reznor rallied back with a blistering *With Teeth* in mid-2005, not only were those voices of negativity silenced, but a new-found level of both respect and appreciation was heaped upon the incredibly private Reznor.

"Not that many people really knew what Trent was going through," said an inside source. "He was living a personal hell. But he fought through it and produced a superlative album."

To many, Reznor's return to the top of the rock world has proven the timeless nature of his work. Indeed, in the post-Cobain mid-'90s Reznor was clearly his generation's most potent musical force. In addition to virtually single-handedly creating platinum-selling masterworks, NIN's main man emerged as the driving force behind an entire branch of the alternative rock family tree. The brilliant but occasionally unpredictable Reznor forged a musical persona so strong and so pervasive that his influence touched the artistic souls of just about every performer then inhabiting the rock jungle. From musical descendants such as Marilyn Manson, to an aspiring Axl Rose, to a generation of bands that grew up under his all-encompassing musical perspectives, this charismatic, black-haired visionary blossomed into his era's most influential and inspiring guiding light.

"My songs are so personal, they come from deep inside me," Reznor stated. "I started writing down my thoughts—usually very dark, depressing thoughts—and those eventually became the lyrics to my songs. I am surprised that what's going on in my

BY ROB ANDREWS

head has been accepted by so many. I always believed my work was too dark, and far too personal, to be accepted the way it has."

The success that Reznor and NIN enjoy in early 2006 provides only an indication of how far this artist has actually come. Growing up in the rural Pennsylvania town of Mercer, Reznor always sensed that he never fit in with the small town values that his parents embraced so passionately. While studying piano at the

age of five, young Trent began to become aware that he possessed a special gift—one that his sports-loving school mates failed to understand. He was encouraged to focus virtually all of his attentions on his music, foregoing a variety of social activities

that he now admits may have made him "a little more normal." But after practicing for eight hours a day, six days a week, for the better part of the next decade, something magical happened—Reznor discovered rock and roll, Kiss in particular, and his life was changed forever.

"When your world has basically consisted of being trained to be a classical pianist by a nun, the idea of standing on stage breathing fire, spouting blood and playing loud rock and roll was incredibly exciting to me," Reznor said. "I began to realize that rock and roll could take me places that classical music never could."

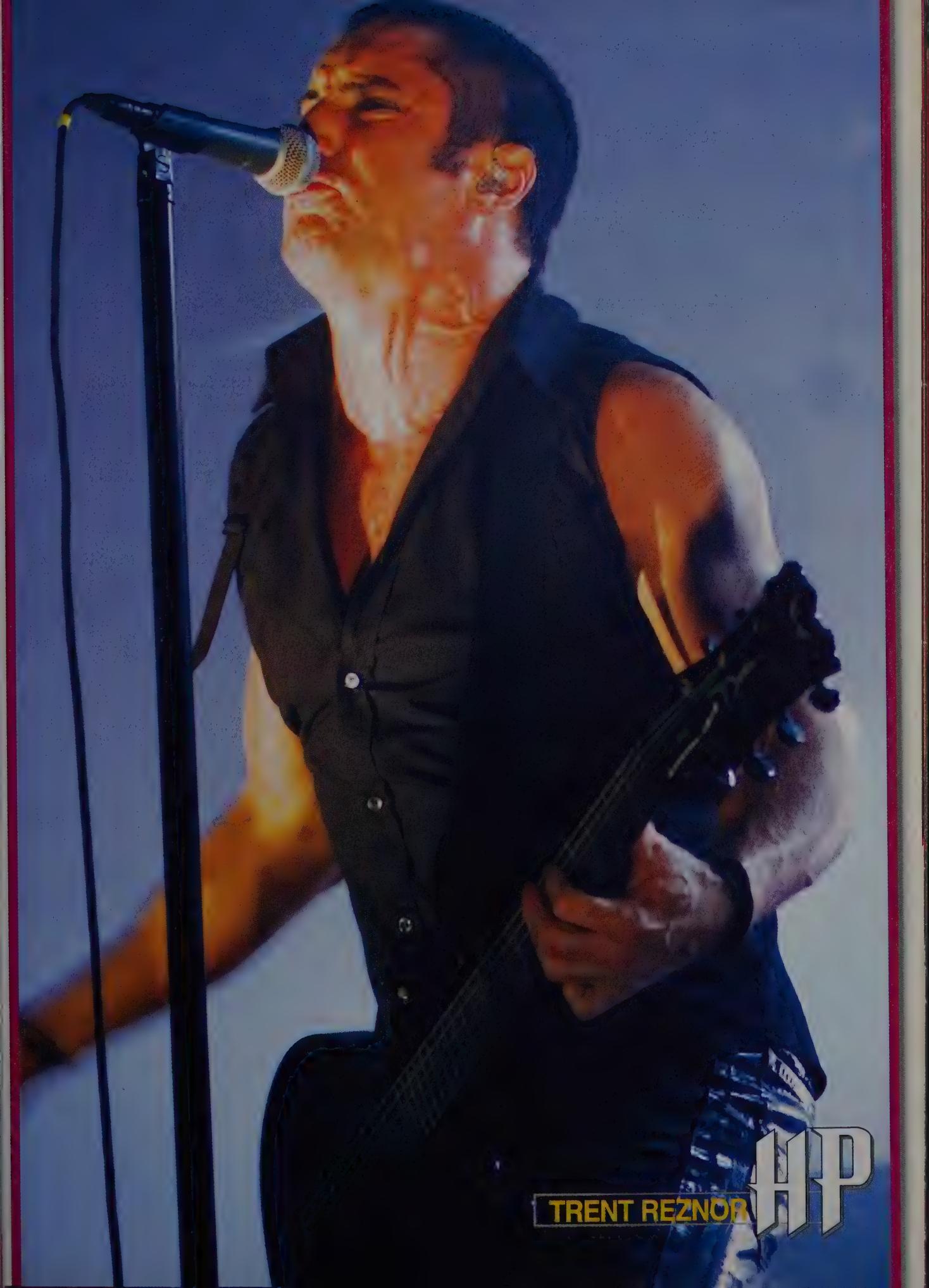
Despite his strong inclination to drop everything else and immediately begin pursuing a career as a rock musician, Reznor's life briefly followed a much more predictable path. He continued studying piano, and

eventually went off to Allegheny College where he geeked out on computer technology. However, rather than turning into a Bill Gates-styled computer wizard, Reznor began wondering how he could apply his technological knowledge to his love of music. After hearing the instantly forgettable Human League/Flock Of Seagulls brand of synthesizer-inspired rock of the early '80s, Reznor felt he had discovered his answer.

It wasn't long before Reznor turned his back on higher education, moved to Cleveland and began working in a local recording studio. During the days Reznor would listen to as much music as possible, then late at night, just before the studio would shut down, he'd go in and fool around with the equipment, familiarizing himself with as many studio techniques and recording quirks as possible. Reznor soon began to develop his own hard-edged style that incorporated his understanding of technology with his love of basic rock and roll. It was an exciting time of discovery, a period that laid the foundation for what would soon emerge as the beginnings of Nine Inch Nails.

"Making music was a dream to me," he said. "It was also my greatest fear. I had spent most of my life playing pieces by classical composers—now I wanted to write my own music. That was very intimidating; it was a great achievement for me when I wrote my first song at the age of 23. I just decided to put my feelings and emotions into every song and just go for it. I didn't know where it was going, and I didn't care. I felt totally free for the first time in my life."

# hammering it home nine inch nails



TRENT REZNOR

R

# CHILDREN OF BODOM

## HEAVY HITTERS

**F**innish heavy metal band Children Of Bodom are known for their shreddy, guitar-driven metal. While they've adopted a simpler approach on their latest release, *Are You Dead Yet?* Children Of Bodom, comprised of singer/guitarist Alexi "Wild Child" Lahto, keyboardist Janne Warman, drummer Jaska Raatikainen, and bassist Henkka T. Blacksmith, still shred as though their lives depend on it. *Are You Dead Yet?* is guitar fueled, Eurometal, with a decidedly modern edge. Songs like *Living Dead Beat* and *Are You Dead Yet?* will make any metal fan, regardless of his or her age and/or level of skill, want to pick up a guitar and start wailing. That's what makes Children Of Bodom so great. They inspire rockers to want to pick up guitars, be it a real guitar or just an air axe. That's what continues the propagation of the metal-head species. *Hit Parader* spoke to the Wild Child and Warman, who were at home in their native Finland and waiting to go on tour.

**HP:** Do you fancy yourself a guitar shredder?

**Alexi:** I definitely don't see myself as guitar hero or anything like that. I have guitar heroes, like Steve Vai or Zakk Wylde. I don't see myself on that level. It's crazy when people say that I am their favorite guitar player in the world. It's flattering, since I've been practicing for years. I know how to play, but that whole hero thing, I don't get!

**HP:** What exactly is Children Of Bodom's label affiliation at this time?

**Janne:** We are on Universal Records worldwide. It's risky for us, being an extreme band and Universal is a major entity. But they have done a good job for us, especially in Japan. But we're looking forward to what they do in the US, to make the band even bigger. We're basically on a new sub-label that they have called Fontana Records, and it's going to be interesting to see how it works in the end.

**HP:** Tell us something we would not know about Children Of Bodom from looking at a photo of you — and you all looking extremely metal- or from listening to *Are You Dead Yet?* Spill some dirt!

**Alexi:** We did a Ramones cover of *Somebody Put Something In My Drink*. Out of respect for Joey Ramone and the song, I was so drunk when I did the vocals for that song. Joey must have been drunk when he did that song originally, so I said there is no way I'm going to be sober doing it. I slammed a bottle of Jameson whiskey and did it. I woke up the next morning, and didn't know what I was doing.

BY AMY SCIARRETTO

**Janne:** All five of us are best friends. We don't fight and we are all tight. All the other band members are my best friends, and that is quite rare. And that makes it good for us, everything is easier when you understand all the other guys and everyone gets along.

**HP:** Children Of Bodom are known for those crazy cover songs... where did that penchant come from?

**Alexi:** We have to get crazier and crazier with the cover songs. We always do covers that shock people. We did Billy Idol's *Rebel Yell*, too. We want to do things people don't expect, like punk rock or '80s songs. It was unpredictable! The coolest thing about covering Andrew WK, actually, is that Andrew heard it, and he dug it, and he did a thing for our DVD, where he talks about us covering *She Is Beautiful*, so that was cool to have. We have to keep surprising people, so we did a Britney Spears cover of *Oops! I Did It Again*. We could cover Slayer; we could cover Maiden, but that's blah. Everyone does that. I love both bands, but it's too obvious.



**HP: The new album Are You Dead Yet? is a bit more straightforward. Was this intentional?**

**Alexi:** Oh yeah, definitely. That's what I say...it's catchier and straightforward. It's a little bit slower, too. But heavier, too. The objective of the band is to get more aggressive and more extreme, and we made a heavier album in a less obvious way.

**HP: How would you describe Children Of Bodom to someone who never heard the band?**

**Alexi:** Aggressive, energetic.

**Janne:** It's so difficult, especially if you look at our whole career, because the music has changed. We just call it 'heavy metal' because that's what it is. In Japan, they call it 'concentration heavy metal.' It's so hard to answer that question. I just play the music. I don't call it anything.

**HP: That's our job, to call it something. And we at Hit Parader call it shreddy guitar metal – do you agree with that? Or do you think we're way off?**

**Janne:** We are very guitar-oriented. The guitars are important. We are known for having lots of solos. We used to be more of a black metal band, but we're really not anymore.

**HP: Why do you think solos are an endangered species in metal? It's like no one is doing it anymore...but CoB are helping bring it back?**

**Alexi:** It's crazy, but in America, a lot of people come up to me, and say thanks for doing solos, but I can't take credit for bringing it back. We're a part of it, sure, but people have been missing solos in metal. It's part of rock music in general, and the new Slipknot album has solos, so does the new Disturbed, so I think the solos are coming back in a big way. I'd sound like a jerk if I said I brought them back...but I am trying and am never going to stop.

**Janne:** As musicians, we think solos are important, because you drop in a solo, and you show your skills. If you don't have solos, all you have are basic riffs and rhythms in your music. Solos are coming back. After the grunge thing hit, solos were banished and not allowed! But they are coming back to the scene and that's cool. We support it.

**HP: In European metal, keyboards are prevalent, like guitar solos were in the '80s. There has been a surge of keyboards in American metal. What are your thoughts on that, Janne?**

**Janne:** I try to convince myself that keyboards are an important role in the band [laughs].

Because I am the keyboardist in my own band. Some people don't like keyboards in metal, but it is an important element that makes our band sound like we sound. We don't use the keyboards in a dramatic setting like other bands do. Some bands make it very dramatic and sweeping, but that's not what we are about.

**HP: Where is Bodom? And what's the origin behind your name?**

**Janne:** Bodom is a lake in Finland, and in the 1960s, 3 kids were killed at the lake. It's the biggest murder mystery in Finland. They were stabbed, and the authorities never found the person who did it. We decided to make the band's name revolve about Bodom, because it's still unsolved.

**HP: What's the hardest part about life on the road?**

**Alexi:** Playing live, we want to make sure people are having a good time. I love being on the road. I want to do anything to make sure people are having a good time at the show. I want them to have a blast. It's the best feeling to have.

**"We just play the music... we don't try to classify it."**



## FROM THE HIT PARADER

# Vault

Each month we bring you an incredible feature direct from the voluminous Hit Parader vault—an article that appeared on these hallowed pages exactly ten years ago! Without changes, editing or updates, these stories provide an amazing glimpse into this thing we call rock and roll, dealing with the form's most famous—and in some cases, infamous—stars. So direct from our March, 1996 issue is this "vintage" interview with the inimitable Metallica.

Every week, come hell or high water, there it is...just sitting there...staring everyone right in the face. For four years, *four* darn years, Metallica's self-titled "black" album has stayed in the Top 200 of the sales charts, never making any spectacular moves upward or precipitous drops down. Ever since its release back in late 1991 (and following an initial four month sales period during which the disc hit Number One and sold over three million copies), that disc has maintained an amazingly steady sales rate, moving a predictable 20,000 units weekly, a tally that has now pushed the album's total sales past the eight million mark. For a medium where an album's chart life is usually measured in months if not weeks, the fact that anyone—especially a so-called heavy metal band—could enjoy such a lengthy stint in the media spotlight is perhaps the highest compliment the music industry, and the millions of fans that support it, can offer.

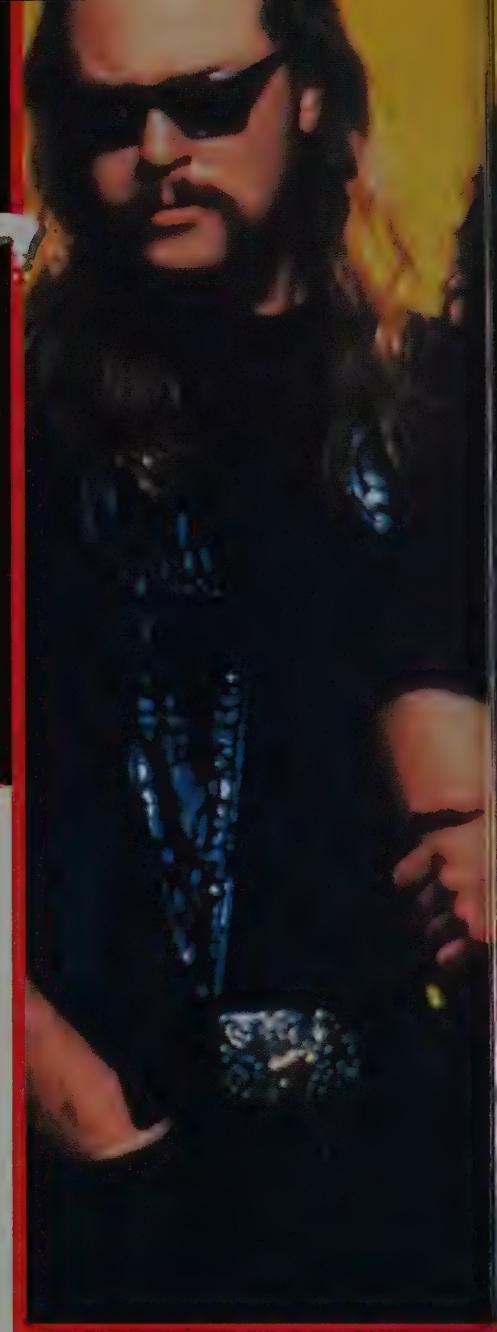
Look at it this way; Pink Floyd's *Dark Side Of The Moon* spent the better part of a dozen years nestled somewhere in the Top 200, and even Johnny Mathis' *Greatest Hits* spent nearly a decade there (believe it or not). But no other hard rock band—not Black Sabbath, not Aerosmith, not even the immortal Led Zeppelin—ever managed to accomplish the feat of releasing an album that four years after its release still maintains such a high degree of sales success. Despite their unprecedented accomplishments, however, Metallica's James Hetfield, Lars Ulrich, Kirk Hammett and Jason Newsted have taken it all very much in stride. As they prepare to finally release their eagerly awaited new album (their first since the

Metallica disc) they look back on their previous accomplishments with a degree of modesty rarely witnessed in the ego-driven world of rock and roll.

"Our fans know what we're about and what motivates us," Ulrich explained. "If you had told us back in 1991 that our next album was going to sell eight million copies we probably would have laughed at you. Everyone knows that selling a lot of albums has never been what Metallica's about. In fact, there have been people in the past who criticized us for being so totally non-commercial. We didn't release singles to radio and we didn't even do videos for a long time. Believe me, we never set out to be successful—so we're as surprised as anyone by what's happened."

What has happened to Metallica over the last four years is the stuff of dreams, myth and legend. During that time these San Francisco-based rockers have found themselves transformed from an already highly successful unit with a string of million-selling albums into true cultural icons, perhaps the most successful and respected metal band of all time. But now new questions have begun to appear on the Metallica horizon. During their time away from the scene, a number of drastic changes have transpired in the hard rock realm. And Ulrich, the band's resident rock historian, has begun to openly wonder if his band's brand of blitzkrieg bop is as attuned to the angst-driven mid-'90s as it was to an earlier time. Still, he insists that the band hasn't changed direction or attitude one bit on their new album, a disc that still finds Metallica laying down the heavy-handed riffs as only they can.

"We know what's going on, but we



don't really let it affect us," he said. "Throughout our career there's really been very few times when the kind of music we've made has been considered fashionable. We started out at a time when metal was looked at as a totally underground thing, and we survived the 'glam' period of the '80s, and now we're gonna just keep doing what we've always done. I think there are still millions of people out there who are waiting for us to do something new."

Indeed there are millions of fans around the world waiting with baited breath to catch even a snippet of new Metallica music. A few of the band's followers were lucky enough to get a preview of two new group creations which were unveiled last September at the band's special Arctic Circle, beer-promotion concert where they performed alongside the likes of Hole and Moisten in front of



500 specially invited guests. But no one aside from a few privileged ears at the band's record label—and, of course, those that worked with the group in the studio—have yet to experience the full impact of the latest Metallidisc. Will it present short, concise bursts of pure metal energy a la their infamous "black" album, or will it harken back to earlier efforts and present more lengthy, multi-dimensional tracks? We all will soon have the answer.

"The songs on Metallica's new album are simply amazing," one studio insider revealed. "Everything you could ask for is there...and more. There are things that are tailor-made for radio and MTV, in that they're under five minutes and have a definite 'hook'. There are other things, however, that really do remind me of things off of **Master Of Puppets**. All I can say is that to my ears, this one is the

*ultimate* Metallica album, and that's certainly saying something."

Of course, there are a few misguided souls out there who will insist that Metallica's moment in the sun has passed and that these now post-30 metal mavens should quietly pack up their mountains of amps and clear the way for younger, hungrier bands. Ulrich has heard those arguments (though rarely to his face) and even he admits that his approach to music making has changed a bit since those halcyon days of the early '80s when Metallica couldn't even land a State-side recording contract. He knows that right along-side the band's ever-loyal fans, there are snipers out there just waiting to savage the band's new album. But Metallica can live with that. Heck, they even *welcome it*. For Metallica, one of the true joys of making the music they make is to draw

emotion, *any* emotion, out of those who listen. For Metallica in 1996, much as it was back in 1983, their attitude remains, "love us, hate us, just don't ignore us." With more than 25 million album sales to their credit, and many more to come, such a fate should never be a problem for these quintessential Bay Area Bashers.

"We just will keep doing this for as long as we can—and as long as we want," said a somewhat defiant Ulrich. "We've never been comfortable being media darlings or crowd favorites. We like to dress in black for a reason. We like it when the odds are against us a little bit, it keeps us from becoming too comfortable. I think for some reason a lot of people are expecting us to go soft on them this time around. Well, anyone who thinks that is gonna be in for a very big surprise."



# Hit Parader

## Galder Musings

BY MIKE G

For 17 years Mike Greenblatt was the editor of Metal Maniacs magazine. During that time he was in constant contact with the metal musicians who inhabit the outer extremes of the hard rock world. Now he brings his voluminous knowledge—as well as his deft writing skills—to the pages of Hit Parader.—Ed.

Hard to believe Norway's **OLD MAN'S CHILD** is on its sixth album. **Vermin** continues the heresy, dredging up Norse saga juice amidst the pioneering Black Metal bombast that this band has perfected since 1993. Right up there with bands like Dimmu Borgir, Cradle Of Filth and Immortal, OMC—now actually a duo comprised of only Galder on all vocals and all instruments plus drummer Reno Killerich—has stripped down to show us all its ugly insides.

Originally, it was Galder (then calling himself Grusom), guitarist Jardar and drummer Tjodalv. Soon bassist Brynjard Tristan joined for the groundbreaking **In The Shades Of Life** demo. It attracted the attention of Shagrath who signed the band to his Hot label and released their **Born Of The Flickering** debut. This, in turn, attracted the attention of Century Media Records who swooped up the devilish horde to release **The Pagan Prosperity**. Bingo. They were on the map.

As it so often goes, though, unaccustomed to prosperity, members came and went and it drove Galder crazy (not that he wasn't crazy to begin with!) Big-name drummers Gene Hoglan and Nick Barker entered and exited through the revolving door before Tjodalv returned. For awhile, Galder even left his own group to join Dimmu Borgir fulltime, before returning for OMC's cult masterpiece **Metal Edge: In Defiance Of Existence**.

New drummer Reno comes from bands Vile and Exmortem and he's a hot shot of pounding proportions! Galder's perverted vision has stayed true (which is why he'll always be "kult") and his instrumental mastery has never been more evident. Testament guitarist Eric Peterson lets loose a hot guest lead on "In Torment's Orbit" but **Vermin** is Galder's show, his finest moment.

Exactly 180% away from Old Man's Child is the pop metal of **30 SECONDS TO MARS** on **A Beautiful Lie**. It's always a crapshoot when Hollywood actors put out albums. Most of the time, they're bad (notable exceptions include Kevin Bacon and Juliette Lewis) but Jared Leto (who you've probably already seen as Harry Goldfarb in *Requiem For A Dream*, Junior in *Panic Room*, Angel Face in *Fight Club*, Paul Allen in *American Psycho* and Hephaestion in *Alexander*) can sing. I mean, he can *really* sing. And he plays a damn good guitar, to boot. His most rock and roll role of all is as 30 Seconds To Mars' frontman as his brother Shannon Leto pounds the drums, lead guitarist Tomo Milicevic stings the ax solos and bassist Matt Wachter holds down the bottom.

"On the first record I created a world, then hid behind it," he says. "With **A Beautiful Lie**, it was time to take a more personal and less cerebral approach. Although this record is still full of conceptual elements and thematic ideas, it is ultimately much more wrapped around the heart than the head. It's about brutal honesty, growth, change. It's an incredibly intimate look into a life that is in the crossroads. A raw emotional journal. A story of life, love, death, pain, joy and passion. Of what it is to be human."

Whew! He's an actor, all right!

Thing is, the dude backs it up. The band played over 300 shows last year. They recorded this album in five different countries on four different continents.

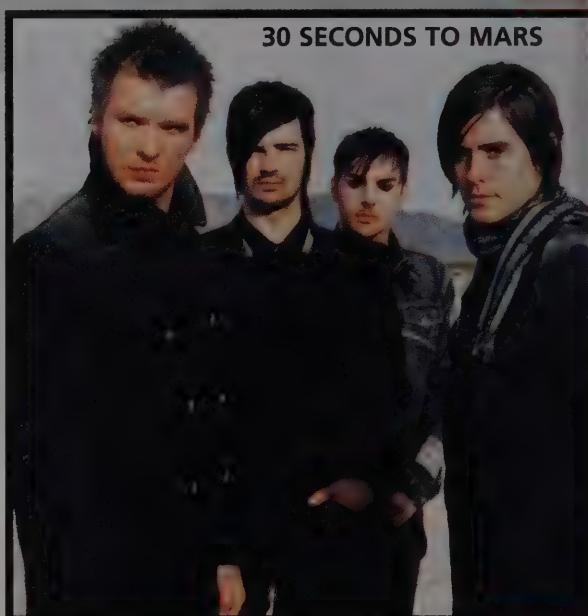
Produced by Josh Abraham (Velvet Revolver), the album's 10 tracks were chosen from 40 written in such places as South Africa, New York, Morocco, Thailand and Los Angeles. Jared says he's influenced by U2, The Cure, Led Zeppelin and Pink Floyd (who isn't?) but 30 Seconds To Mars sounds like none of 'em. And that's a good thing. It aughta be interesting to see where they go on album #3.

Continuing in a pop-metal mode, **Embrace The Storm** by **STREAM OF PASSION** courts being an oxymoron with its beautiful-metal. Can there be such a thing? Singer Marcela Bovio, from Mexico, has an absolutely lovely voice. Composer/guitarist/producer Arjen Anthony Lucassen, from Holland, had used her when with Ayreon on a rock opera called **The Human Equation**. He always wanted to put that voice in a semi-metal setting. He also has been wanting to form a new band for the last 10 years. Bingo. He's done both.

"I regretted not being able to use her many talents in Ayreon," explains Arjen. "Hating to let a good thing go to waste, I decided to construct a project completely centered on her singing and writing."

"I refused to start the project with a musical direction in mind," he continues. "I wanted her to feel completely free to experiment with some simple acoustic guitar demos I had made. She added her musical ideas, and then the other band members added theirs [Dutch drummer Davy Mickens, Swedish guitarist Lori Linstruth, Mexican pianist Alejandro Millan and Dutch bassist Johan Van Stratum]. The music had to develop as naturally as possible, as would happen with a real band, which was an interesting challenge considering that some of us live thousands of miles apart. The whole thing turned into one big worldwide jam session, which was very unusual and a lot of fun."

All it will take is one listen for you to **Embrace this Storm**. It's gorgeous feelgood metal of a decidedly light and breezy nature. Simply put, there's just nothing like it out there today and that fact alone makes it unique and appealing.



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# A DOZEN FURIES

## ANGRY CREW

BY PAUL REGAN

There's no tougher judge of heavy metal talent than an *Ozzfest* audience. They've seen it all and heard it all. If they don't like you, they'll boo you off the stage faster than you can say "Slipknot Rules." But, on the other hand, if they like you, they'll provide you with the kind of support than can quickly lead to fame in fortune in the rock and roll world. No better example of this phenomenon might exist than A Dozen Furies, the Texas-based metal unit that continually wowed the crowd during their summer-long Second Stage stint at the 2005 *Ozzfest*. Indeed, by tour's end, vocalist Bucky Garrett, guitarist Marc Serrano, guitarist Joey Turner, bassist Keith Reber and drummer Mike Miller had moved more post-show copies of their introductory EP, *Awake And Lifeless*, than any other Second Stage band had moved of theirs. To put it simply, the people had spoken!

"The whole experience at *Ozzfest* was incredible for us," Serrano said. "We went from show to show in a old RV with the Texas flag flying proudly out the window. We didn't mind that everyone knew we were a bunch of rednecks—heck, we kind of enjoyed it. But knowing that we won a lot of fans over—mostly people that had never heard of us or our music before—is what we'll take away as our lasting memory of that whole tour."

It hasn't taken the members of A Dozen Furies long to capitalize on the career boost supplied by their *Ozzfest* experiences. Less than a month after the unit played their final stop on the famed metal fast last September, the band's first full-length major label album, *A Concept of Fire*, was released. And if this full-spirited, all-guns-blazing metal effort doesn't get your blood boiling and your fist pumping, then perhaps you should immediately drop in on your local hospital for a check-up. Nah, this ain't stuff designed to reinvent the metal wheel, or supply new substance or direction for an occasionally flagging form. What it is, however, is a foot-stompin', rip-roarin' showcase for A Dozen Furies "furious" musical attack. On such songs as, *The Gift*, *Push Away* and *Lost In a*

*Fantasy*, the band's double-barreled guitars roar like shotguns and Garrett's multi-dimensional vocals cut through the proceedings like a rusty razor. Clearly this isn't music for the faint-of-heart... but were you actually expecting it to be?

"This music is loud and aggressive, but there's also a lot of pain and struggle in there," Garrett said. "There's also a bit of love/hate along with a little revenge. You know, it's kind'a cool when you can take some crap from somebody and then find a way of putting it right back in their face. That's what these songs try to do."

A Dozen Furies have been working hard to perfect their balls-to-the-wall approach to the metal craft since these Lone Star lads all first crossed paths back in junior high school. Back then it was far from an all-for-one mentality that the five shared, since they all were in different bands that were competing for attention in the ever-rockin' suburbs of Dallas—and even in the same band... all at different times! But finally after a number of fits and starts, by the time they had reached their late teens, these guys slowly began to

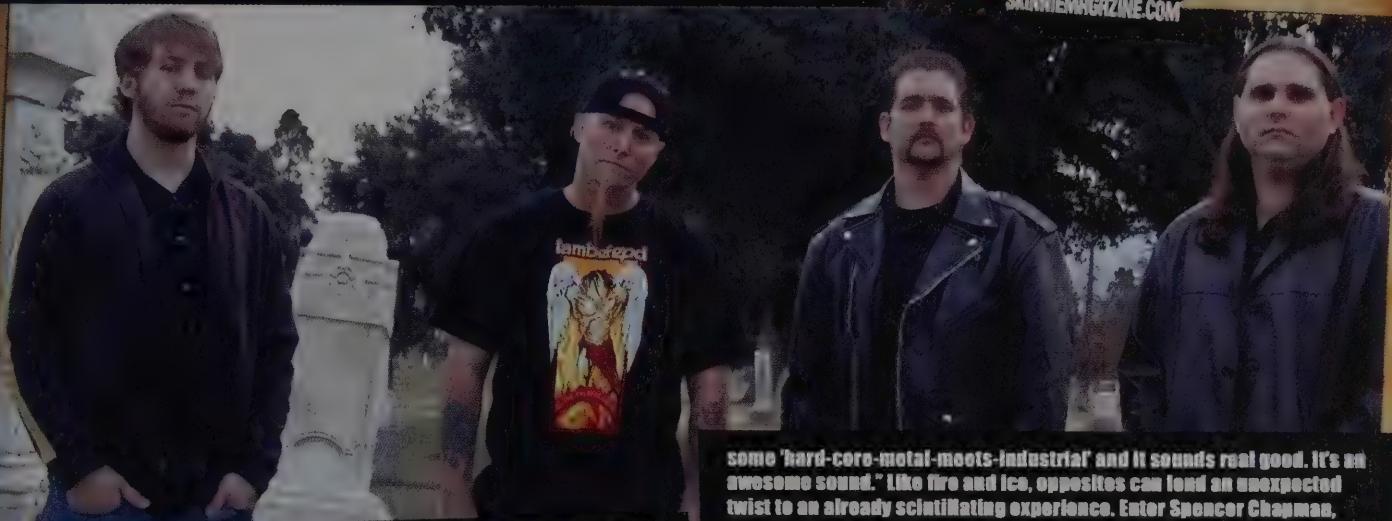
realize that they'd be better off together than apart, and A Dozen Furies sprang to life. Soon after, they hit the notorious Texas club circuit, while taking time out to recorded a low-budget indie EP, *Rip the Stars Down*, which opened the eyes of many within the music industry, and led directly to the band not only landing a major recording deal but being invited to join the 2005 *Ozzfest* road trek.

"Things have come together pretty well for us," Serrano said. "We like to think that's because we're sensible—a least for a rock band. We didn't blow a lot of money just because we signed a record deal. We kept our RV, and we kept our expenses down when we recorded the album. We're in this for the long haul and we want to make sure we have the resources to keep going. We'll put everything we have into the music we make... not into our pockets."

**"This music is loud and aggressive."**

# WONT BE UNKNOWN MUCH LONGER

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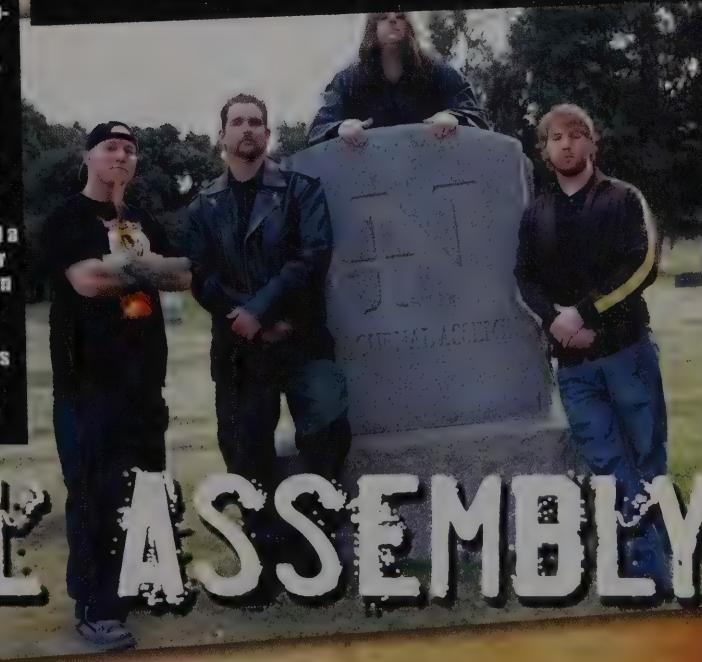


New release by Nocturnal Assembly entitled *From the Unknown* won't be unknown for long. From the hypnotic first chords of the opening song "State of Mind" fans of the Inland Empire's Nocturnal Assembly are taken on a journey of intense emotional twists and turns on their newest album *From the Unknown*. Powerful musical tracks laid down by producer/arranger and mastermind Don Lettier are matched by equally hard hitting lyrics written and sung by front man Chris Ferral. "I write a lot about politics, religion, but I hide a lot of stuff in the lyrics, twist things around, see if anyone ever catches it." The partnership between Don and Chris has been a way of life since the two were kids growing up in Highland. "I can't remember a time when Chris wasn't in my life. We've known each other since we were seven years old," explains Don. "We went to school together, played ball together. He drifted away, went and got drunk in Texas for three years, came back, knocked on my door and said 'Hey dude, let's start a band' and I said ok." Their partnership is deep-rooted and their rough edges fit together perfectly like two pieces of a puzzle. "I'm a cigar smoking, scotch drinking, woman-loving man" expounds the gregarious Chris with a satisfied grin. Don agrees. "He's the loose canon, I'm the glue that holds it all together." Their musical union produced the critically acclaimed *Phase 1* in 2001, now a hard to find collector's item. With the release of *From the Unknown*, which has received limited airplay on X103.9, Nocturnal Assembly felt that it was time to expand their sound in order to create a live show as bombastic as the '80s hair bands Chris is influenced by, like Ratt and Motley Crue. As Don explained, "It seemed logical. When I knew we wanted to expand from a two-piece with drum machines and programming to a live band, I knew just where to go." They went straight to the only guys they felt had the intensity, drive, vision and insanity to not just follow their lead but add a new dimension to their brand of industrial electronic rock. Chris adds, "The chemistry of the four of us is very intense. Our record is exactly what we wanted. It stands alone. It's a great record. But our live sound now is much more in-your-face than the record." Chris, who up to now had been playing all the guitar tracks himself, had no problem setting aside his ego to let Lester Maness, the maniacal guitar-shredding diamond-in-the-rough, steal a bit of the limelight. "He's a phenomenal guitar player. He plays a lot heavier than I do," Don agrees. "Lester has unbelievable stage presence. He's grown up in the metal scene and I want to exploit that for what it's worth. Lester's just a nice, angry, but happy guy. He gives 110% in everything he does!" Lester adds, "I've been playing guitar for years. I'm an angry guy sometimes and I had a lot of hostility. But these guys have watched me grow. When I heard what they had I was like 'I could spruce that shit up! I'll turn it into

some 'hard-core-metal-meets-industrial' and it sounds real good. It's an awesome sound." Like fire and ice, opposites can lend an unexpected twist to an already scintillating experience. Enter Spencer Chapman, adroit drummer and resident chick magnet who walks softly but carries big drum sticks. Don't let his outwardly soft-spoken nature fool you. As Don enthusiastically gushes "Spencer plays like nobody's business. I know that anything I throw toward Spencer, he's gonna' be able to handle. Within three rehearsals I knew it was going to work." Uncharacteristically introspective for a drummer, Spencer sees no need to label their music or decipher lyrics. "We don't really sound like anything else because we have so many influences and genres going. I think it's very cool that people have their own interpretation of music because that's what makes us human. People listen to our music and hear all this rock, hip hop, industrial, techno stuff going on and they think 'Wow, they actually make it work!'" Don smiles like a kid who knows that something explosive is right around the corner. "The four of us feel like a cohesive band now. With *From the Unknown* we were secluded. Chris and I dealt only with our two brains, and it took a year to do it. But it's like a cocoon. The album stands well on its own, but something is about to happen." For a limited time only you can download their tracks free on their website.

Go to [www.mentatrecords.com](http://www.mentatrecords.com) and take a listen before it's too late. Don't miss their upcoming showcase February 24th at Angel's Roadhouse in Yucaipa, which will start off a series of local concerts before they hit the road on their summer national tour. For details check out their website or go to [www.angelsroadhouse.com](http://www.angelsroadhouse.com).

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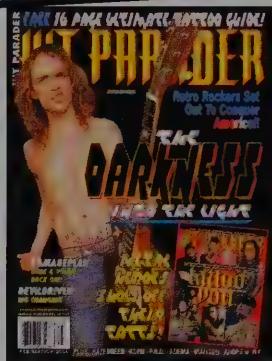
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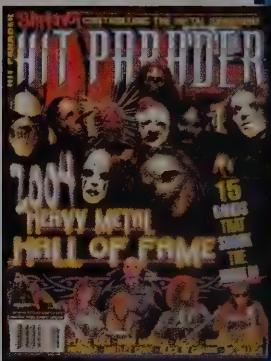
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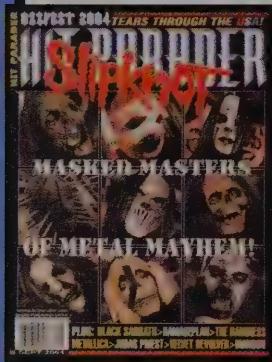
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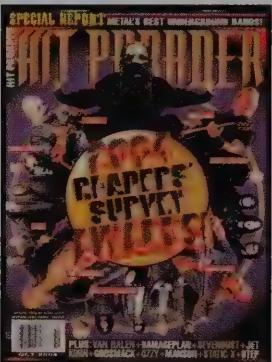
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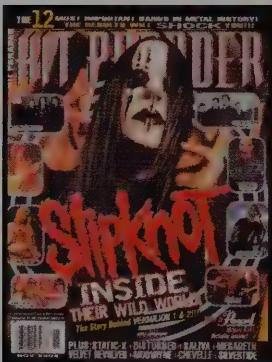
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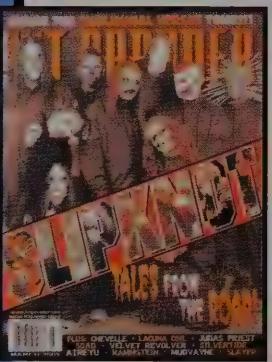
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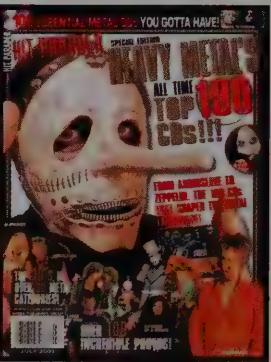
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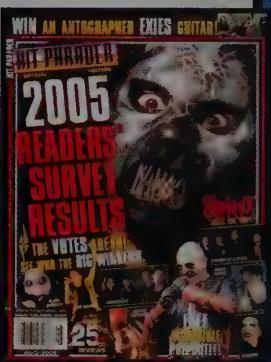
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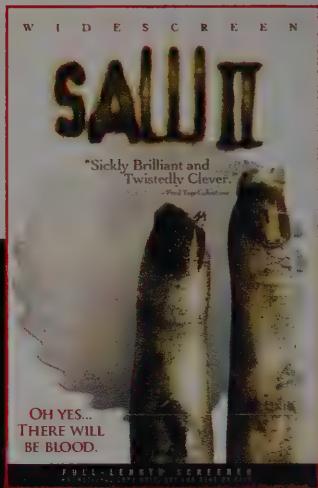
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BY FRANK CAFIERO

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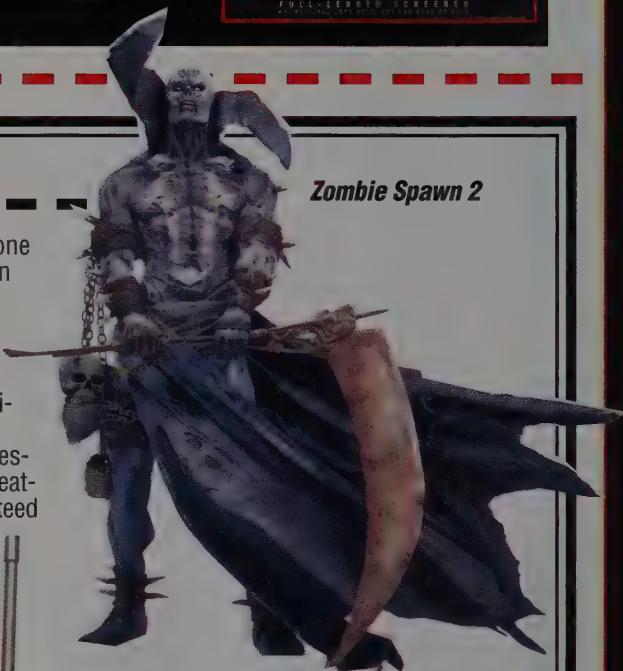


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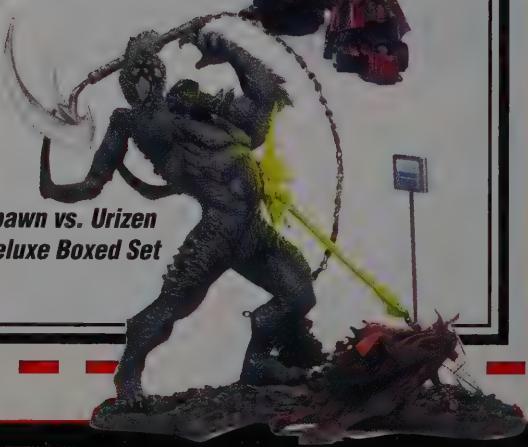


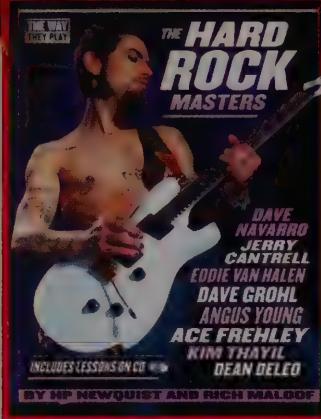
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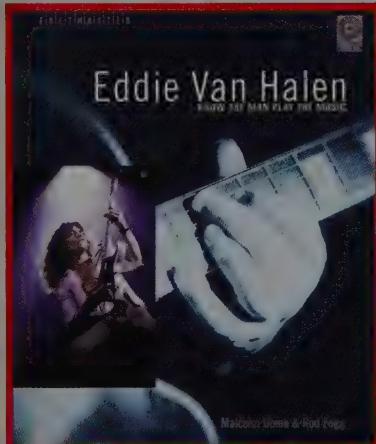
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By Rich Maloof, HP Newquist

No doubt about it, these players are masters of hard-rocking guitar—the heavyweight champions of arena-shaking sounds. Their greatness comes in part from their technical skill and their ability to infuse blues, metal, and even pop flavors into simple three-chord progressions. But most of all, it's their commitment—their fervent ability to go for it—that has made them guitar gods. Depending on your attitude, these guys can motivate you to pack it up or rip it up. Why not go for it?

**The Way They Play—The Hard Rock Masters** explores the work of these guitar czars. You'll discover their stylistic secrets, learn how they played their most famous riffs, and find out how each created his unique sound. The accompanying CD walks you note-by-note through licks that characterize their styles, played with their signature tones.

Just as these guitar greats have inspired one another, The Hard Rock Masters will inspire your own playing and deepen your knowledge of the music and its history. For more info or to order go to [www.backbeatbooks.com](http://www.backbeatbooks.com).



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By Rod Fogg, Malcolm Dome

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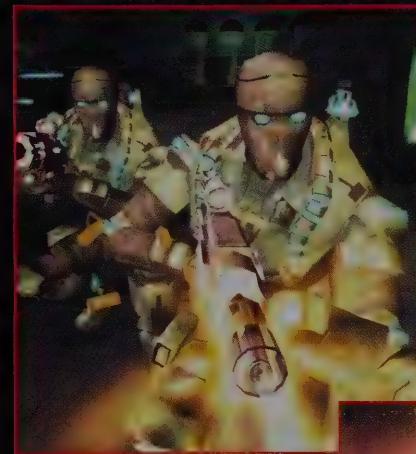
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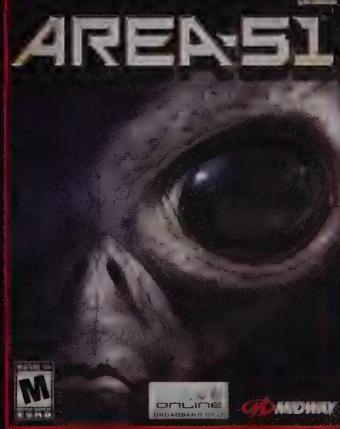
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# TECH TALK WITH HIN

## MUDVAYNE

BY P.J. MERKLE

**E**ven for a band used to living in the eye of a musical hurricane, the members of Mudvayne admit that there have been moments during the last year when things have been a little more turbulent than even they had expected. Mind you, it's not like it's been a *bad* sort of storm that has blown the way of vocalist Chad Gray, guitarist Greg Tribbett, bassist Ryan Martinie and drummer Matt McDonough. Certainly it hasn't been the kind of Force 5 disturbance that can tear careers asunder and place band members at each other's throats.

Rather, for this highly ambitious Midwestern crew, the "storm" in question has been more a case of occasional confusion and controversy, most spawned by this unit's decision to drop their trademark makeup—a decision that has generated quite the brouhaha around this highly cerebral, ever-clever shock-rock unit. But judging by the gold-selling success of their latest disc, *Lost and Found*, and the continual kudos they've drawn along the tour trail, it would appear as if the Vayne have weathered their career storm quite nicely—and they've now set their sights on even more dramatic changes... if such things are even possible.

"We knew that some people were going to have a strong reaction to us dropping some of the more theatrical aspects of our stage production," McDonough said. "And we sensed that some long-time fans might take a little time to fully absorb the fact that we went in a somewhat more experimental direction on *Lost and Found*. We felt that there might be some short-term consequences. But we also all believed that after the initial surprise had worn off, everyone would realize that we had done the right thing for Mudvayne—both on the short term and the long term."

Nearly ten months after their most recent disc hit record store shelves, and almost a year after the band began playing all their shows sans the hideous makeup and outrageous outfits with which they had garnered a majority of their initial fame, it is clear that Mudvayne did, in fact, make the right career call. But why would a band that had already enjoyed a solid degree of success with their two previous albums, and had begun to win a hard-earned rep as a major on-stage force, decide to take such a radical course of action? Some cynics may state that it was because the constant comparisons to fellow Midwestern masked metal masters, Slipknot, were beginning to drive the members of Mudvayne this/close to the edge. And while the band will admit a growing frustration with a previous inability to solidify their image, they insist that those on-going comparisons were "knot" the reason for their changes.

"Everyone who knows Mudvayne knows that we owe a lot to Slipknot in terms of getting some early recognition," McDonough said. "But they haven't been an issue for us for a *long* time. Anyone who thinks we dropped our makeup because of them just doesn't understand what makes us tick. We did it for a very simple and basic reason;

it was the right time for us to do it."

Through their words, deeds and actions, it's obvious that the members of Mudvayne have always been just a little different from your conventional heavy metal band. Oh sure, these Illinois natives made their rep a few years back with explosive discs like *L.D. 50* and *The End of All Things to Come*... along with shock rock tactics that included dressing themselves in some of the most outrageous stage gear ever seen by the eyes of mortal man. But things began to change for Mudvayne when they toured with Metallica back in 2003. It was then, for the first time, that they chose to go on stage "naked"—or at least without the protective covering supplied by their attention-grabbing garb.

It was instantly clear to one and all that Mudvayne had taken a major evolutionary step. And it was with the same bold attitude that they entered the recording studio in early 2005 to record *Lost and Found*, the most cerebral, daring and diverse album of their career. When it came time for the band to hit the road—which in addition to their own sold-out shows included an eye-popping run as Main Stage mainstays on last summer's *Ozzfest*—the wild attire stayed in the closet, replaced by more "sedate" rock and roll wear. With the focus now squarely on their music, rather than on their "look", suddenly more and more metal fans began to recognize the Vayne's inherent charms.

"That was the plan all along," McDonough said. "We wanted to shift everyone's focus on to the music. The focus needed to shift. The music is so strong on this album that we believe that nothing should overshadow it in any way. But all of this was something that happened very gradually, and very naturally over the last few years. I think you'd have to go back to 2002 to see where the progression began. That's when we started to occasionally go on stage with very scaled-down makeup, and by the time we toured with Metallica in 2003, we weren't wearing any makeup at all. It was something that just happened—not something that was planned."

Planned or not, the net results of Mudvayne's efforts have produced the band's third consecutive gold album, and a growing sense that these one-time

Shock Rockers are now in the metal game for the long haul. Indeed, Mudvayne have not only weathered the strongest professional hurricane of their lives, they've managed to come through the storm bigger, badder and better than ever.

"There is a great deal of intensity to this music," McDonough said. "But there's also an accessibility that may not have been there before. A lot of these songs are melody-driven, which isn't something you could say about a lot of the material on the first two albums. We've managed to develop a not-so-delicate balance between intensity and accessibility on *Lost and Found*, and by doing so we've created the best album of our career."

"I don't believe we began writing or recording with any particular aspirations in mind—other than to make an incredible album. But then some of the songs ended up sounding like a weird mix of pop and Black Metal, and we had to stop and question ourselves a little bit. But once we did, we realized that what we were creating was very special—even if it was a little different. There is a natural growth that's evident here. We're not the same band that made *L.D. 50*. We've learned so much, and we've grown up a lot as musicians and as people. All that is reflected in this music."

"The plan all along was to shift everyone's focus to the music."



MUDVAYNE

HP

# INSTRUMENTALLY SPEAKING

BY MICHAEL SHORE

## TAMA

We like to think we feature terrific instruments in this space month after month - well-made, playable, reliable, durable, you name it. But it's not all that often that we get to cover something revolutionary. But that would seem to be exactly what we have in Tama's new Omni-Tune drums.

Drummers: how'd you like to be able to tune both heads on each drum, top and bottom, all from the top side? No more taking a tom off a holder, a snare off a stand, a floor tom off the floor; no more getting out of your drum throne and crouching at various uncomfortable angles around the outside of your kit, between cymbal and mic stands, for the painstaking tuning process. Being able to tune both heads from the top means more precise tuning, getting the sound you want faster and easier - because you can sit there and play the drum as you tune it - instead of hitting it, getting up and bending over or walking round or, at best, reaching and straining uncomfortably to try to tension a rod you can't even see from where you're sitting, then hitting and bending and straining again...and again...and again... (after decades and decades of this, no wonder drummers are butts of so many jokes). And we're not talking about top and bottom heads being tuned simultaneously at the same tension. No, this is fully independent tuning, just like always...and with the option to tune the bottom head from the bottom if you like...AND with drums that look and sound so good they are absolute state-of-the-art!

Ladies and gentlemen, we give you Tama's Starclassic Bubinga Omni-Tune drums. If you know anything about drums you know the other words there besides Omnitune - Tama, Starclassic and Bubinga - cover the great-sounding, great-looking, state-of-the-art part, and we'll get to more on that in a bit. But let's get right to the Omni-Tune part - the revolutionary part. Here's how it works: check out the lug-sleeves on the drums, the metal tubes that run vertically along the outside of each drum shell, into which the top and bottom head tension rods are screwed. They look normal - based on the minimal design common in vintage drums of the 1930s. In fact they are based on a classic snare drum lug system invented in 1930 by legendary drum designer William David Gladstone. But inside each of those lug sleeves are some very special, innovative, three-way tension rods. When you look at them closely from the top or batter-head side, as if you were

going to tune the top head, you'll see that inside and above a large hex bolt sits a smaller square-head bolt. The larger bolt tunes the top head. The smaller bolt tunes the bottom head from the top. The drums come with their own special two-way Omnitune drumkey for each size bolt. There is another larger hex bolt at the other end, to tune the bottom head the old-fashioned way, from the bottom, if you like. The smaller, inner bolt on the top side, which tunes the bottom head from the top, turns counter-clockwise inside the larger bolt: tuning in that direction is the one part of the system that takes the most getting used to. Once you're over that hump, you're quite

liable to find yourself missing all the bending and stretching and moving around so little you'll wonder why on earth nobody ever thought of this before. And you're sure to be thanking Tama for this ingenious system - which, by the way, Tama assures us is as stable as any conventional tuning system.

Now, back to the drums onto which this amazing new tuning system is bolted; Bubinga, also known as African Rosewood, is

a singularly beautiful exotic wood with a uniquely powerful and resonant sound - it's got some of maple's classic warmth, some of birch's penetrating punch, but most of all it's got its own special sonic personality. Furthermore, the three-way lugs (ultra-classy brushed nickel like the rest of the hardware) are bolted on with a special two-point mounting system so contact with the shell is minimized, letting the Bubinga wood shells (accented with abalone inlay, as if they're not beautiful enough on their own) resonate as freely as possible. Die-cast hoops, Evans top and bottom heads, and Tama's Star-Cast free-suspension tom-mounting system are all standard, as is a special Omni-Tune drumkey mount. Toms come sized 7 x 8", 8 x 10", 9 x 12", 10 x 13", 11 x 14", 12 x 15" and 13 x 16"; floor toms 14 x 14", 16 x 16" and 16 x 18"; snare drums 5 and 6 x 14". Starclassic Bubinga Omni-Tune kits are also available in Piano Black and Piano White as well as natural Bubinga, and conventionally tuned Bubinga kits are available too, should you want to go that way.

Tama's Starclassic Omni-Tune drums are already used and endorsed by such pros as John Tempesta and session superstars Kenny Aronoff and Harvey Mason. Wanna know more (aside from what took so long for anyone to do something this brilliant)? Head online to [www.tama.com](http://www.tama.com)!



# A GUIDE TO THE LATEST GEAR



## PLANET WAVES PRO-WINDER TUNER

The new Planet Waves Pro-Winder is a five-in-one guitar tool combining string winder, string cutter, string stretcher, bridge-pin puller, and built-in dual-mode strobe-sweep chromatic tuner. It's like the Swiss Army Knife for guitarists! The tuner has a rotary display with red and green LEDs and can be calibrated from A435 to A445, and powers off automatically after four minutes of inactivity. For more info visit [www.planet-waves.com](http://www.planet-waves.com) online.

## DEAN MARKLEY YNGWIE MALMSTEEN STRINGS

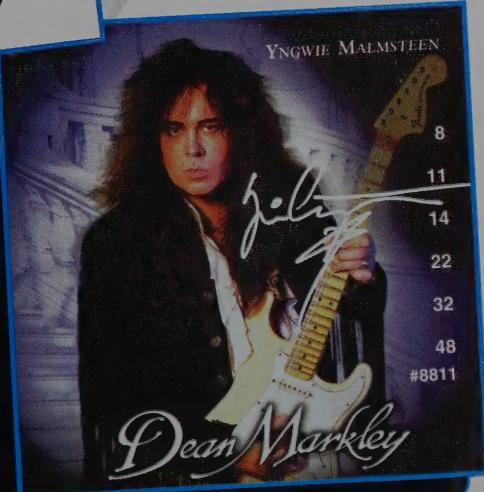
Yngwie Malmsteen's a guitar legend mainly for his super-fleet fingers, so if he designs a set of strings you might want to sit up and take notice. Well, he has - with string kings Dean Markley. Built for speed, power, tone, sustain and long life, they come in four custom gauge sets, all priced at \$10.45, and Yngwie himself calls them "Malmsteen-proof"! See more for yourself online at [www.deanmarkley.com](http://www.deanmarkley.com).

## PEAVEY VORTEX V GUITAR

Peavey's new Vortex V Metal Guitar is designed to sound as hot as its satin-black V-shaped body looks, with Peavey's hottest ceramic pickups, fully floated Floyd Rose-licensed double-locking tremolo, basswood body and bolt-on 25" scale 24-fret maple neck with rosewood fingerboard for fast-and-furious shredding. Six-in-line headstock, and single volume and tone controls complete one sharp picture. For more info, visit [www.peavey.com](http://www.peavey.com) online.

## IBANEZ SZ520 LIMITED PRODUCTION GUITARS

Ibanez is doing a limited-production run of its very popular SZ520 electric guitars in spectacular Transparent Purple and Transparent Green finishes that beautifully accent the gorgeous quilted-maple tops of their sculpted double-cutaway mahogany bodies. The guitars also feature 25.1" scale, 22-fret set-in mahogany necks with bound rosewood fingerboards, Gibraltar III bridges, 2 Duncan/Ibanez humbucking pickups (with Alnico magnets at neck and ceramic magnets at bridge), and two volume and one tone controls. List price \$665.99. For more info check out [www.ibanez.com](http://www.ibanez.com) online.



# INSTRUMENTALLY SPEAKING

# BREAKING DRUM



## TAMA

Kenny Aronoff - mentioned elsewhere this column in our piece on Tama's Omni-Tune drums - may be best-known for his work with John Cougar Mellencamp, but he's also played on more hit singles and albums than we can possibly name or count. Suffice to say, you've heard his rock-solid, tasty deep-pocket grooves more than you know, and not for nothing is he known as "the hardest-working drummer in showbiz." Well, he's now gotten back together with Tama to design a third model in his "Trackmaster" series of Signature Palette snare drums - a 6" x 14" model with 1.5 mm thick engraved nickel-plated brass shell, fitted with nickel-plated brass Mighty Hoops. The engraving pattern looks like a stylized "KA" disguised as two hawks facing each other, or something - very sharp. Its sound is very full as you might expect from a deep snare - Aronoff calls it his "John Bonham snare," with a bigger-than-life tone. But it can be sensitive, too, with a broad range of frequency and response, from soft and subtle to wall-flattening explosive. List price \$729.99. For more info check out [www.tama.com](http://www.tama.com) online.



## PRO-MARK

And finally, Pro-Mark's new High-Torque Drumkey is designed for marching drums, but rock players who beat their skins hard ought to give it a look too: it's lightweight yet exceptionally strong, compact yet with plenty of leverage, and designed for drum corps that put an unusual amount of stress on their drums and keys. It retails for \$34.95 and you can learn more online at [www.promark.com](http://www.promark.com).

## PAISTE

Paiste continues expanding its perfect-for-hard-rock 2002 cymbal line with more and more unique and exotic tone colors. The 14" (\$472/pair list) and 15" (\$512/pair) Crunch Hats are hi-hat pairs that match a medium-thin, conventionally hammered top cymbal with an unusually hammered medium-heavy bottom cymbal for a unique and penetrating sound that's fat, full and meaty open or closed. Rock Hats, in 14" size only (\$472/pair list), have a medium heavy top and an extra heavy bottom, both with shallower visible hammer-dents than the more deeply pock-marked Crunch Hat bottoms; they're as cutting as the Crunch Hats but with a brighter, clearer, somewhat sharper tone. Meanwhile the Flanger Splash, sized 12" (\$196 list) and 14" (\$236 list), may be the most distinctive splash on the market: like Paiste's other Flanger effects cymbals, it gets its name from a special, unique design that causes it to modulate when struck through whooshing overtones and undertones that make it sound naturally phase-shifted or put through a flanger effects pedal. To make that effect audible, it's also built to have longer sustain than most splashes, making it a virtual micro-crash. Verrrrrry interesting. Learn more and hear sound samples at [www.paiste.com](http://www.paiste.com).



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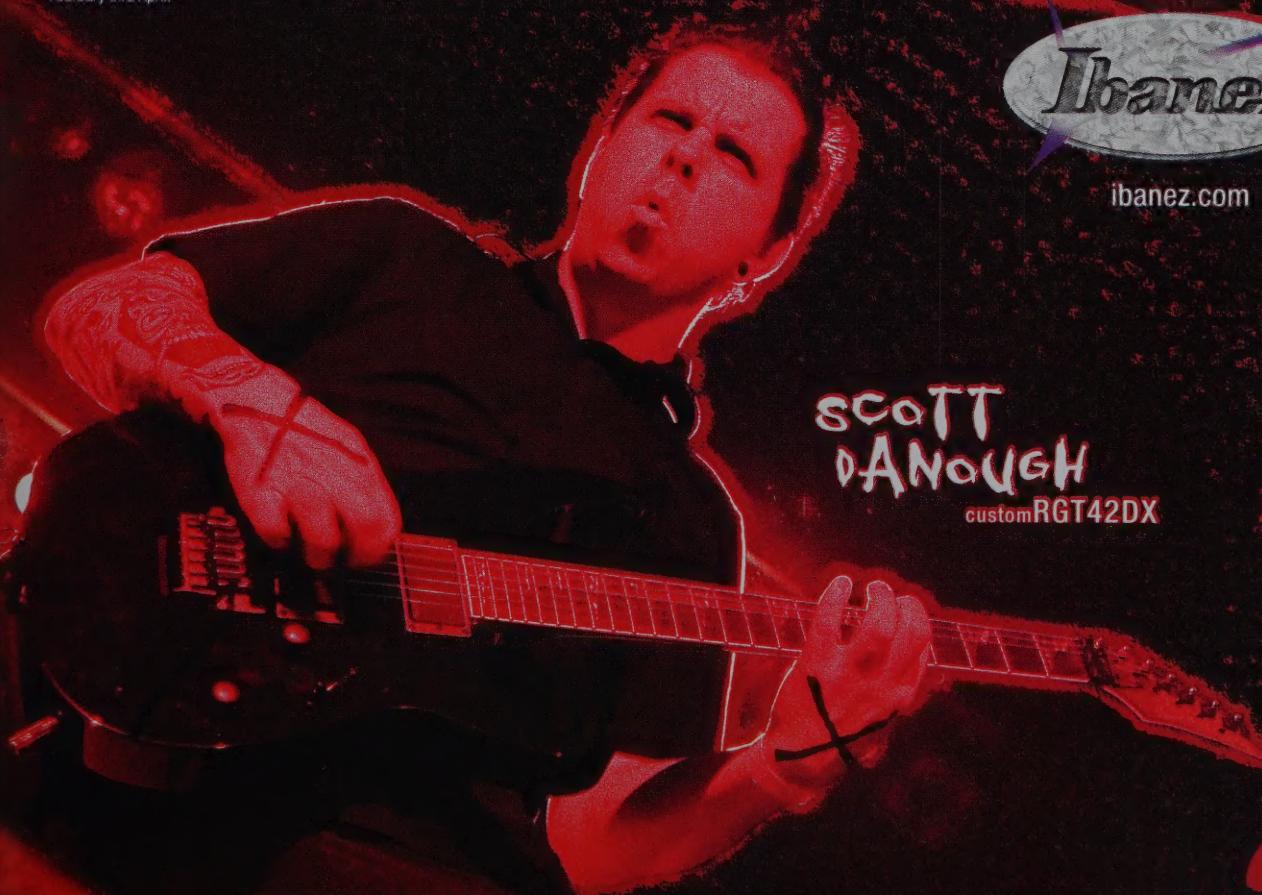
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- MY CHEMICAL ROMANCE  
TO THE END (RNR CHERYL MIX)
- SLIPKNOT  
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- ALKALINE TRIO  
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- AIDEN  
THE LAST SUNRISE (DUSK MIX)
- SENSES FAIL  
BITE TO BREAK SKIN (THE LEGION OF DOOM REMIX)
- ATREYU  
HER PORTRAIT IN BLACK
- TRIVIUM  
WASHING AWAY ME IN THE TIDES
- MENDOZZA  
ETERNAL BATTLE
- LACUNA COIL  
OUR TRUTH
- GOSLING  
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